

LONGMANS' ENGLISH COURSE FOR INDIAN SCHOOLS

FIFTH READING BOOK

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

NEW IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

8 HORNBY ROAD, BOMBAY

303 BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

167 MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

LONDON AND NEW YORK

1914

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NOTE

THIS book was originally issued as the Fourth Reading Book in Longmans' English Course for Indian Schools, and is now re-issued as a Fifth Reading Book. A new and easier book has taken its place as the Fourth Reading Book.

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THE SIXTH READER

I. HOW THE WHITE COMPANY CAME TO BE DISBANDED

PART I

Sir A. Conan Doyle, the popular novelist, established his claim to the first rank of present-day story-writers by the publication of *Micah Clarke*. Some others of his popular books are *The Refugees*, *Exploits of Brigadier Gerard*, *Rodney Stone*, *The White Company*, and the famous *Sherlock Holmes* series of stories. One of his best works is the *History of the Boer War*, written soon after the chief incidents of the war had assumed their proper perspective.

Then uprose from the hill in the rugged Cantabrian valley a sound such as had not been heard in those parts before, nor was again, until the streams which rippled amid the rocks had been frozen by over four hundred winters and thawed by as many returning springs.

Deep and full and strong it thundered down the ravine, the fierce battle-call of a warrior race, the last stern welcome to whoso should join with them in that world-old game where the stake is death. Thrice it swelled forth and thrice it sank away, echoing and reverberating amidst the crags.

Then, with set faces, the Company rose up among the storm of stones, and looked down upon the thousands who sped swiftly up the slope against them. Horse and spear had been set aside, but on foot, with sword and battle-axe, their broad shields

slung in front of them, the chivalry of Spain rushed to the attack.

And now arose a struggle so fell, so long, so evenly sustained, that even now the memory of it is handed down amongst the Cantabrian mountaineers, and the ill-omened knoll is still pointed out by fathers to their children as the 'Altura de los Ingleses,' where the men from across the sea fought the great fight with the knights of the south.

The last arrow was quickly shot, nor could the slingers hurl their stones, so close were friend and foe. From side to side stretched the thin line of the English, lightly armed and quick-footed, while against it stormed and raged the pressing throng of fiery Spaniards and of gallant Bretons.

The clink of crossing sword-blades, the dull thudding of heavy blows, the panting and gasping of weary and wounded men, all rose together in a wild long-drawn note, which swelled upwards to the ears of the wondering peasants who looked down from the edges of the cliffs upon the swaying turmoil of the battle beneath them.

Back and forward reeled the leopard banner, now borne up the slope by the rush and weight of the onslaught, now pushing downwards again as Sir Nigel, Burley, and Black Simon, with their veteran men-at-arms, flung themselves madly into the fray. Alleyne, at his lord's right hand, found himself swept hither and thither in the desperate struggle, exchanging savage thrusts one instant with a Spanish cavalier, and the next torn away by the whirl of men and dashed up against some new antagonist.



To the right Sir Oliver, Aylward, Hordle John, and the bowmen of the Company fought furiously against the monkish Knights of Santiago, who were led up the hill by their prior—a great deep-chested man, who wore a brown monastic habit over his suit of mail. Three archers he slew in three giant strokes, but Sir Oliver flung his arms round him, and the two, staggering and straining, reeled backwards and fell, locked in each other's grasp, over the edge of the steep cliff which flanked the hill.

In vain his knights stormed and raved against the thin line which barred their path; the sword of Aylward and the great axe of John gleamed in the forefront of the battle, and the huge jagged pieces of rock, hurled by the strong arms of the bowmen, crashed and hurtled amid their ranks.

Slowly they gave back down the hill, the archers still hanging upon their skirts, with a long litter of writhing and twisted figures to mark the course which they had taken. At the same instant the Welshmen upon the left, led on by the Scotch earl, had charged out from among the rocks which sheltered them, and by the fury of their outfall had driven the Spaniards in front of them in headlong flight down the hill.

In the centre only things seemed to be going ill with the defenders. Black Simon was down—dying, as he would wish to have died, like a grim old wolf in its lair—with a ring of his slain around him. Twice Sir Nigel had been overborne, and twice Alleyne had fought over him until he had staggered to his feet once more. Burley lay sense-

less, stunned by a blow from a mace, and half of the men-at-arms lay littered upon the ground around him. Sir Nigel's shield was broken, his crest shorn, his armour cut and smashed, and the vizor torn from his helmet; yet he sprang hither and thither with light foot and ready hand, engaging two Bretons and a Spaniard at the same instant—thrusting, stooping, dashing in, springing out—while Alleyne still fought by his side, stemming with a handful of men the fierce tide which surged up against them.

Yet it would have fared ill with them had not the archers from either side closed in upon the flanks of the attackers, and pressed them very slowly and foot by foot down the long slope, until they were on the plain once more, where their fellows were already rallying for a fresh assault.

2. HOW THE WHITE COMPANY CAME TO BE DISBANDED

PART II

But terrible indeed was the cost at which the last assault had been repelled. Of the three hundred and seventy men who had held the crest, one hundred and seventy-two were left standing, many of whom were sorely wounded and weak from loss of blood. Sir Oliver Buttesthorn, Sir Richard Caus-ton, Sir Simon Burley, Black Simon, Johnston, a hundred and fifty archers and forty-seven men-at-arms had fallen, while the pitiless hail of stones was

already whizzing and piping once more about their ears, threatening every instant to further reduce their numbers.

Sir Nigel looked about him at his shattered ranks, and his face flushed with a soldier's pride.

'Ha!' he cried, 'I have fought in many a little bickering, but never one that I would be more loth to have missed than this. But you are wounded, Alleyne?'

'It is nought,' answered his squire, staunching the blood which dripped from a sword-cut across his forehead.

'These gentlemen of Spain seem to be most courteous and worthy people. I see that they are already forming to continue this debate with us. Form up the bowmen two deep instead of four. By my faith! some very brave men have gone from among us. Aylward, you are a trusty soldier, for all that your shoulder has never felt accolade, nor your heels worn the gold spurs. Do you take charge of the right; I will hold the centre, and you, my Lord of Angus, the left.'

'Ho! for Sir Samkin Aylward!' cried a rough voice among the archers, and a roar of laughter greeted their new leader.

'By my hilt!' said the old bowman, 'I never thought to lead a wing in a stricken field. Stand close, camarades, for, by these finger-bones! we must play the man this day.'

'Come hither, Alleyne,' said Sir Nigel, walking back to the edge of the cliff which formed the rear of their position. 'And you, Norbury,' he con-

tinued, beckoning to the squire of Sir Oliver, 'do you also come here.'

The two squires hurried across to him, and the three stood looking down into the rocky ravine which lay a hundred and fifty feet beneath them.

'The prince must hear of how things are with us,' said the knight. 'Another onfall we may withstand, but they are many and we are few, so that the time must come when we can no longer form line across the hill. Yet if help were brought us we might hold the crest until it comes. See yonder horses which stray among the rocks beneath us?'

'I see them, my fair lord.'

'And see yonder path which winds along the hill upon the further end of the valley?'

'I see it.'

'Were you on those horses, and riding up yonder track, steep and rough as it is, I think that ye might gain the valley beyond. Then on to the prince, and tell him how we fare.'

'But, my fair lord, how can we hope to reach the horses?' asked Norbury.

'Ye cannot go round to them, for they would be upon ye ere ye could come to them. Think ye that ye have heart enough to clamber down this cliff?'

'Had we but a rope.'

'There is one here. It is but one hundred feet long, and for the rest ye must trust to God and to your fingers. Can you try it, Alleyne?'

'With all my heart, my dear lord, but how can I leave you in such a strait?'

'Nay, it is to serve me that ye go. And you, Norbury?'

The silent squire said nothing, but he took up the rope, and, having examined it, he tied one end firmly round a projecting rock. Then he cast off his breastplate, thighpieces, and greaves, while Alleyne followed his example.

'Tell Chandos, or Calverley, or Knolles, should the prince have gone forward,' cried Sir Nigel. 'Now may God speed ye, for ye are brave and worthy men.'

It was, indeed, a task which might make the heart of the bravest sink within him. The thin cord, dangling down the face of the brown cliff, seemed from above to reach little more than half-way down it. Beyond stretched the rugged rock, wet and shiny, with a green tuft here and there thrusting out from it, but little sign of ridge or foothold. Far below the jagged points of the boulders bristled up, dark and menacing.

Norbury tugged thrice with all his strength upon the cord, and then lowered himself over the edge, while a hundred anxious faces peered over at him as he slowly clambered downwards to the end of the rope. Twice he stretched out his foot, and twice he failed to reach the point at which he aimed; but even as he swung himself for a third effort a stone from a sling buzzed like a wasp from amid the rocks and struck him full upon the side of his head. His grasp relaxed, his feet slipped, and in an instant he was a crushed and mangled corpse upon the sharp ridges beneath him.

'If I have no better fortune,' said Alleyne, leading Sir Nigel aside, 'I pray you, my dear lord, that you will give my humble service to the Lady Maude, and say to her that I was ever her true servant and most unworthy cavalier.'

3. HOW THE WHITE COMPANY CAME TO BE DISBANDED

PART III

The old knight said no word, but he put a hand on either shoulder, and kissed his squire, with the tears shining in his eyes. Alleyne sprang to the rope, and sliding swiftly down, soon found himself at its extremity. From above it seemed as though rope and cliff were well-nigh touching, but now, when swinging a hundred feet down, the squire found that he could scarce reach the face of the rock with his foot, and that it was as smooth as glass, with no resting-place where a mouse could stand.

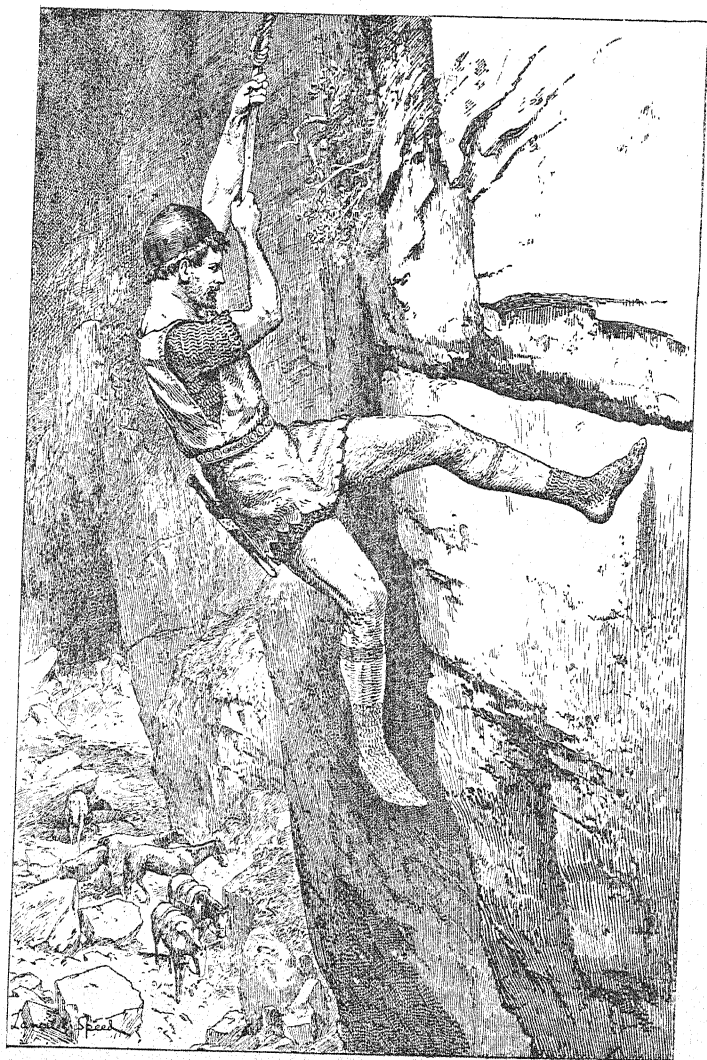
Some three feet lower, however, his eye lit on a long jagged crack which slanted downwards, and this he must reach if he would save not only his own poor life but that of the eight score men above him. Yet it were madness to spring for that narrow slit with nought but the wet smooth rock to cling to. He swung for a moment, full of thought, and even as he hung there another of the hellish stones sang through his curls, and struck a chip from the face of the cliff.

Up he clambered a few feet, drew up the loose end after him, unslung his belt, held on with knee and with elbow while he spliced the long tough leathern belt to the end of the cord; then lowering himself as far as he could go, he swung backwards and forwards until his hand reached the crack, when he left the rope and clung to the face of the cliff. Another stone struck him on the side, and he heard a sound like a breaking stick, with a keen stabbing pain which shot through his chest.

Yet it was no time now to think of pain or ache. There was his lord and his eight score comrades, and they must be plucked from the jaws of death. On he clambered, with his hands shuffling down the long sloping crack, sometimes bearing all his weight upon his arms, at others finding some small shelf or tuft on which to rest his foot.

Would he never pass over that fifty feet? He dared not look down, and could but grope slowly onwards, his face to the cliff, his fingers clutching, his feet scraping and feeling for a support. Every vein and crack and mottling of that face of rock remained for ever stamped upon his memory.

At last, however, his foot came upon a broad resting-place, and he ventured to cast a glance downwards. Thank God! he had reached the highest of those fatal pinnacles upon which his comrade had fallen. Quickly now he sprang from rock to rock until his feet were on the ground, and he had his hand stretched out for the horse's rein, when a sling-stone struck him on the head, and he dropped senseless upon the ground.



An evil blow it was for Alleyne, but a worse one still for him who struck it. The Spanish slinger, seeing the youth lie slain, and judging from his dress that he was no common man, rushed forward to plunder him, knowing well that the bowmen above him had expended their last shaft. He was still three paces, however, from his victim's side when John upon the cliff above plucked up a huge boulder, and, poising it for an instant, dropped it with fatal aim upon the slinger beneath him.

It struck upon his shoulder, and hurled him, crushed and screaming, to the ground, while Alleyne, recalled to his senses by these shrill cries in his very ear, staggered on to his feet, and gazed wildly about him. His eyes fell upon the horses grazing upon the scanty pasture, and in an instant all had come back to him—his mission, his comrades, the need for haste. He was dizzy, sick, faint, but he must not die, and he must not tarry, for his life meant many lives that day. In an instant he was in his saddle and spurring down the valley.

Loud rang the swift charger's hoofs over rock and reef, while the fire flew from the stroke of iron, and the loose stones showered up behind him. But his head was whirling round, the blood was gushing from his brow, his temple, his mouth. Ever keener and sharper was the deadly pain which shot like a red-hot arrow through his side. He felt that his eye was glazing, his senses slipping from him, his grasp upon the reins relaxing. Then, with one mighty effort, he called up all his strength for a single minute. Stooping down he loosened the

stirrup-straps, bound his knees tightly to his saddle flaps, twisted his hands in the bridle, and then, putting the gallant horse's head for the mountain path, he dashed the spurs in and fell forward fainting, with his face buried in the coarse black mane.

Little could he ever remember of that wild ride. Half conscious, but ever with one thought beating in his mind, he goaded the horse onwards, rushing swiftly down steep ravines, over huge boulders, along the edges of black abysses. Dim memories he had of beetling cliffs, of a group of huts with wondering faces at the doors, of foaming, clattering water, and of a bristle of mountain beeches.

Once, ere he had ridden far, he heard behind him three deep sullen shouts, which told him that his comrades had set their faces to the foe once more. Then all was blank, until he woke to find kindly blue English eyes peering down upon him, and to hear the blessed sound of his country's speech.

From 'The White Company,' by Sir A. CONAN DOYLE.

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4. A DAY IN HIDING

PART I

Robert Louis Stevenson, born in 1850, was intended for the family profession of engineering, but being unequal to the arduous course of workshop training of a practical engineer, he read for the bar instead. Having from his youth exercised himself in writing, he contributed in 1876 the brilliant series of essays in the *Cornhill Magazine*, afterwards published in volume form under the title of *Virginibus Puerisque*, and *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*. From that time his pen was rarely idle. He achieved his greatest success by the publication of *Treasure*

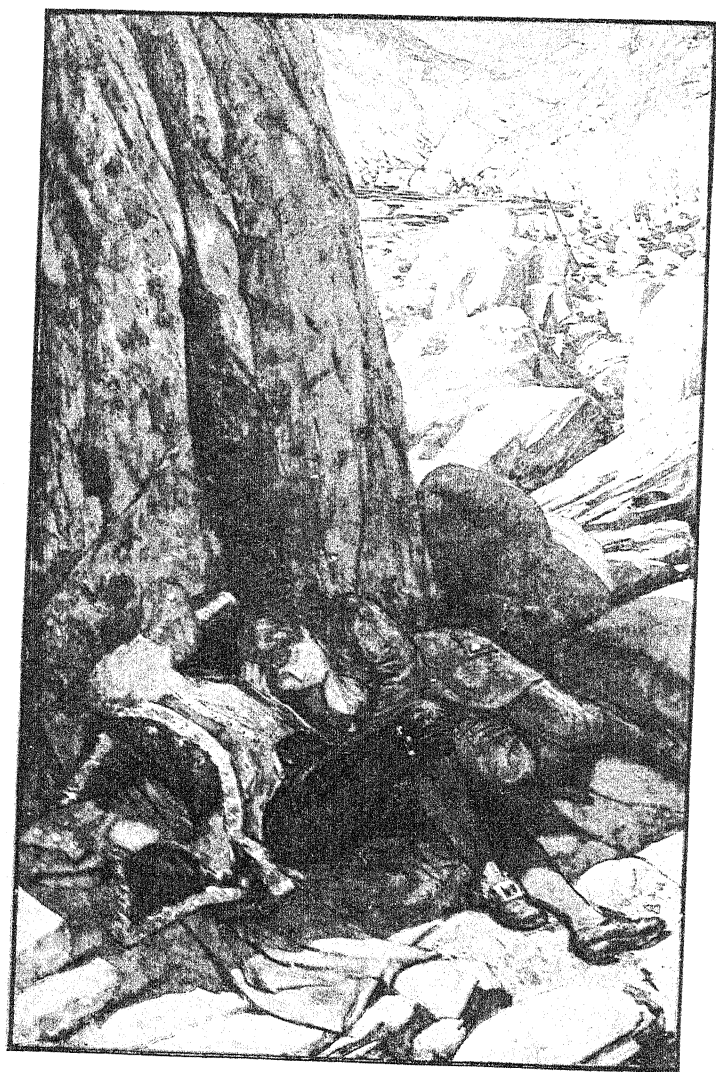
Island in 1882. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Kidnapped appeared in 1886. Other successful books were *The Wrecker*, *The Master of Ballantrae*, *The Black Arrow*, and *Catriena*. Stevenson's life was one of unremitting industry, ill-health alone interrupting his literary labours. The latter part of his life was spent in Samoa, where he built himself a house, and there he died in 1894.

Never a word he said, but set off running again for his life, and I must stagger to my feet and run after him. I had been weary before, but now I was sick and bruised; I kept stumbling as I ran, I had a stitch that came near to overmaster me; and when at last Alan paused under a great rock that stood there among a number of others, it was none too soon for David Balfour.

A great rock, I have said; but by rights it was two rocks leaning together at the top, both some twenty feet high, and at the first sight inaccessible. Even Alan (though you may say he had as good as four hands) failed twice in an attempt to climb them; and it was only at the third trial, and then by standing on my shoulders and leaping up with such force as I thought must have broken my collar-bone, that he secured a lodgment. Once there, he let down his leathern girdle; and with the aid of that and a pair of shallow footholds in the rock, I scrambled up beside him.

Then I saw why we had come there; for the two rocks, being both somewhat hollow on the top and sloping one to the other, made a kind of dish or saucer, where as many as three or four men might have lain hidden.

All this while Alan had not said a word, and had run and climbed with such a savage,



silent frenzy of hurry, that I knew that he was in mortal fear of some miscarriage. Even now we were on the rock he said nothing, nor so much as relaxed the frowning look upon his face; but clapped flat down, and keeping only one eye above the edge of our place of shelter, scouted all round the compass. The dawn had come quite clear; we could see the stony sides of the valley, and its bottom, which was bestrewed with rocks, and the river, which went from one side to another, and made white falls; but nowhere the smoke of a house, nor any living creature but some eagles screaming round a cliff.

Then at last Alan smiled.

'Ay,' said he, 'now we have a chance;' and then looking at me with some amusement, 'yo're no very gleg¹ at the jumping,' said he.

At this I suppose I coloured with mortification, for he added at once, 'Hoots! small blame to ye! To be feared of a thing and yet to do it is what makes the prettiest kind of a man. And then there was water there, and water's a thing that dauntons even me. No, no,' said Alan, 'it's no you that's to blame, it's me.'

I asked him why.

'Why,' said he, 'I have proved myself a gomerall this night. For first of all I take a wrong road, and that in my own country of Appin; so that the day has caught us where we should never have been; and thanks to that, we lie here in some danger and mair discomfort. And next (which

¹ Brisk.

is the worst of the two, for a man that has been so much among the heather as myself) I have come wanting a water-bottle, and here we lie for a long summer's day with naething but neat spirit. Ye may think that a small matter: but before it comes night, David, ye'll give me news of it.'

I was anxious to redeem my character, and offered, if he would pour out the brandy, to run down and fill the bottle at the river.

'I wouldnae waste the good spirit either,' says he. 'It's been a good friend to you this night; or in my poor opinion, ye would still be cooking on yon stone. And what's mair,' says he, 'ye may have observed (you that's a man of so much penetration) that Alan Breck Stewart was perhaps walking quicker than his ordinar.'

'You!' I cried, 'you were running fit to burst.'

'Was I so?' said he. 'Well, then, ye may depend upon it, there was nae time to be lost. And now here is enough said; gang you to your sleep, lad, and I'll watch.'

Accordingly, I lay down to sleep; a little peaty earth had drifted in between the top of the two rocks, and some bracken grew there, to be a bed to me; the last thing I heard was still the crying of the eagles.

I dare say it would be nine in the morning when I was roughly awakened, and found Alan's hand pressed upon my mouth.

'Wheesht!' he whispered. 'Ye were snoring.'

'Well,' said I, surprised at his anxious and dark face, 'and why not?'

He peered over the edge of the rock, and signed to me to do the like.

5. A DAY IN HIDING

PART II

It was now high day, cloudless, and very hot. The valley was as clear as in a picture. About half a mile up the water was a camp of red-coats; a big fire blazed in their midst, at which some were cooking; and near by, on the top of a rock about as high as ours, there stood a sentry, with the sun sparkling on his arms. All the way down along the riverside were posted other sentries; here near together, there widelier scattered; some planted like the first, on places of command, some on the ground level and marching and counter-marching, so as to meet half-way. Higher up the glen, where the ground was more open, the chain of posts was continued by horse-soldiers, whom we could see in the distance riding to and fro. Lower down, the infantry continued; but as the stream suddenly swelled by the confluence of a considerable burn, they were more widely set, and only watched the fords and stepping-stones.

I took but one look at them and ducked again into my place. It was strange indeed to see this valley, which had lain so solitary in the hour of dawn, bristling with arms and dotted with the red coats and breeches.

‘Ye see,’ said Alan, ‘this was what I was afraid

of, Davie: that they would watch the burn-side. They began to come in about two hours ago, and, man! but ye're a grand hand at the sleeping! We're in a narrow place. If they get up the sides of the hill they could easy spy us with the glass; but if they'll only keep in the foot of the valley, we'll do yet. The posts are thinner down the water: and, come night, we'll try our hand at getting by them.'

'And what are we to do till night?' I asked.

'Lie here,' says he, 'and birstle.'

That one good Scotch word, 'birstle,' was indeed the most of the story of the day that we had now to pass. You are to remember that we lay on the bare top of a rock, like scones upon a girdle; the sun beat upon us cruelly; the rock grew so heated, a man could scarce endure the touch of it; and the little patch of earth and fern, which kept cooler, was only large enough for one at a time. We took turn about to lie on the naked rock, which was indeed like the position of that saint that was martyred on a gridiron; and it ran in my mind how strange it was, that in the same climate and at only a few days' distance, I should have suffered so cruelly, first from cold upon my island and now from heat upon this rock.

All the while we had no water, only raw brandy for a drink, which was worse than nothing; but we kept the bottle as cool as we could, burying it in the earth, and got some relief by bathing our breasts and temples.

The soldiers kept stirring all day in the bottom

of the valley, now changing guard, now in patrolling parties hunting among the rocks. These lay around in so great a number, that to look for men among them was like looking for a needle in a bottle of hay; and being so hopeless a task, it was gone about with less care. Yet we could see the soldiers pike their bayonets among the heather, which sent a cold thrill through my vitals; and they would sometimes hang about our rock, so that we scarce dared to breathe.

It was in this way that I first heard the right English speech; one fellow as he went by actually clapping his hand upon the sunny face of the rock on which we lay, and plucking it off again with an oath. 'I tell you it's 'ot,' says he; and I was amazed at the clipping tones and the odd sing-song in which he spoke, and no less at that strange trick of dropping out the letter 'h.' To be sure, I had heard Ransome; but he had taken his ways from all sorts of people, and spoke so imperfectly at the best, that I set down the most of it to childishness. My surprise was all the greater to hear that manner of speaking in the mouth of a grown man; and indeed I have never grown used to it; nor yet altogether with the English grammar, as perhaps a very critical eye might here and there spy out even in these memoirs.

6. A DAY IN HIDING

PART III

The tediousness and pain of these hours upon the rock grew only the greater as the day went on; the rock getting still the hotter and the sun fiercer. There were giddiness, and sickness, and sharp pangs like rheumatism to be supported. I minded then, and have often minded since, on the lines in our Scotch psalm:—

‘The moon by night thee shall not smite,
Nor yet the sun by day;’

and indeed it was only by God’s blessing that we neither of us were sun-smitten.

At last, about two, it was beyond man’s bearing, and there was now temptation to resist, as well as pain to thole. For the sun being now got a little into the west, there came a patch of shade on the east side of our rock, which was the side sheltered from the soldiers.

‘As well one death as another,’ said Alan, and slipped over the edge and dropped on the ground on the shadowy side.

I followed him at once, and instantly fell all my length, so weak was I and so giddy with that long exposure. Here, then, we lay for an hour or two, aching from head to foot, as weak as water, and lying quite naked to the eye of any soldier who should have strolled that way. None came, however, all passing by on the other

side; so that our rock continued to be our shield even in this new position.

Presently we began again to get a little strength; and as the soldiers were now lying closer along the riverside, Alan proposed that we should try a start. I was by this time afraid of but one thing in the world; and that was to be set back upon the rock; anything else was welcome to me; so we got ourselves at once in marching order, and began to slip from rock to rock one after the other, now crawling flat on our bellies in the shade, now making a run for it, heart in mouth.

The soldiers, having searched this side of the valley after a fashion, and being perhaps somewhat sleepy with the sultriness of the afternoon, had now laid by much of their vigilance, and stood dozing at their posts or only kept a look-out along the banks of the river; so that in this way, keeping down the valley and at the same time towards the mountains, we drew steadily away from their neighbourhood. But the business was the most wearing I had ever taken part in. A man had need of a hundred eyes in every part of him, to keep concealed in that uneven country and within cry of so many and scattered sentries. When we must pass an open place, quickness was not all, but a swift judgment not only of the lie of the whole country, but of the solidity of every stone on which we must set foot; for the afternoon was now fallen so breathless that the rolling of a pebble sounded abroad like a pistol shot, and would start the echo calling among the hills and cliffs.



DAVID & ALAN AT THE BURN ~

H.J. FORD

By sundown we had made some distance, even by our slow rate of progress, though to be sure the sentry on the rock was still plainly in our view. But now we came on something that put all fears out of season; and that was a deep rushing burn, that tore down, in that part, to join the glen river. At the sight of this we cast ourselves on the ground and plunged head and shoulders in the water; and I cannot tell which was the more pleasant, the great shock as the cool stream went over us, or the greed with which we drank of it.

We lay there (for the banks hid us), drank again and again, bathed our chests, let our wrists trail in the running water till they ached with the chill; and at last, being wonderfully renewed, we got out the meal-bag and made drammach in the iron pan. This, though it is but cold water mingled with oatmeal, yet makes a good enough dish for a hungry man; and where there are no means of making fire, or (as in our case) good reason for not making one, it is the chief stand-by of those who have taken to the heather.

As soon as the shadow of the night had fallen, we set forth again, at first with the same caution, but presently with more boldness, standing our full height and stepping out at a good pace of walking. The way was very intricate, lying up the steep sides of mountains and along the brows of cliffs; clouds had come in with the sunset, and the night was dark and cool; so that I walked without much fatigue, but in continual fear of falling and rolling down the mountains, and with no guess at our direction.

The moon rose at last and found us still on the road; it was in its last quarter, and was long beset with clouds; but after a while shone out and showed me many dark heads of mountains, and was reflected far underneath us on the narrow arm of a sea-loch.

At this sight we both paused: I struck with wonder to find myself so high and walking (as it seemed to me) upon clouds: Alan to make sure of his direction.

Seemingly he was well pleased, and he must certainly have judged us out of ear-shot of all our enemies; for throughout the rest of our night-march he beguiled the way with whistling of many tunes, warlike, merry, plaintive; reel tunes that made the foot go faster; tunes of my own south country that made me fain to be home from my adventures; and all these, on the great, dark, desert mountains, making company upon the way.

From 'Kidnapped,' by R. L. STEVENSON.

By kind permission of Messrs. CASSELL & Co.

7. ERIC BRIGHTYES WRESTLES WITH OSPAKAR BLACKTOOTH

Henry Rider Haggard, a widely read writer, was born in Norfolk in 1856. From 1875 to 1879 he was in the Government service in South Africa. During this time he made himself acquainted with the country and native customs, and this knowledge is depicted in such tales as **King Solomon's Mines**, **She**, **Allan Quatermain**, and **Nada the Lily**. The great success of his stories is due to their wealth of incident and to the author's generous gift of imagination. Mr. Haggard has recently done the cause of agriculture a great service by the publication of his book **Rural England**, in which he has stated the results of exhaustive inquiries into the causes of its decline in this country.

Now they stood face to face, with arms outstretched, waiting the word of Asmund. He gave

it, and they circled round each other with arms held low. Presently Ospakar made a rush, and, seizing Eric about the middle, tried to lift him, but with no avail. Thrice he strove and failed, then Eric moved his foot and lo! it slipped upon the sanded turf. Again Eric moved and again he slipped, a third time and he slipped a third time, and before he could recover himself he was full on his back and fairly thrown.

Gudruda saw and was sad at heart, and those around her said that it was easy to know how the game would end.

'What said I?' quoth Swanhild, 'that it would go badly with Eric were Ospakar's arms about him.'

'All is not done yet,' answered Gudruda. 'Eric's feet slipped most strangely, as though he stood on ice.'

But Eric was very sore at heart and could make nothing of this matter—for he was not overthrown by strength.

He sat on the snow and Ospakar and his sons mocked him. But Gudruda drew near and whispered to him to be of good cheer, for fortune might yet change.

'I think that I am bewitched,' said Eric sadly; 'my feet have no hold of the ground.'

Gudruda covered her eyes with her hand and thought. Presently she looked up quickly. 'I seem to see guile here,' she said. 'Now look narrowly on thy shoes.'

He heard, and, loosening the string, drew a shoe from his foot and looked at the sole. The cold of

the snow had hardened the fat, and there it was, all white upon the leather.

Now Eric rose in wrath. 'Methought,' he cried, 'that I dealt with men of honourable mind, not with cheating tricksters. See now! it is little wonder that I slipped, for grease has been rubbed upon my shoes—and, by Thor! I will cleave the man who did it to the chin,' and as he said it his eyes blazed so dreadfully that folk fell back from him. Asmund took the shoes and looked at them. Then he spoke:

'Brighteyes tells the truth, and we have a sorry knave among us. Ospakar, canst thou clear thyself of this ill deed?'

'I will swear on the holy ring that I know nothing of it, and if any man in my company has had a hand therein he shall die,' said Ospakar.

Now all men cried aloud that this was the greatest shame, and that the match must be set afresh; only Ospakar bethought him of that two hundred in silver which he had promised to Groa, and looked around, but she was not there. Still, he gainsaid Eric in the matter of the match being set afresh.

Then Eric cried out in his anger that he would let the game stand as it was, since Ospakar swore himself free of the shameful deed.

Now Ospakar and Eric faced each other again in the ring, but this time the feet of Eric were bare.

Ospakar rushed to get the upper hold, but Eric was too swift for him and sprang aside. Again he rushed, but Eric dropped and gripped him round

the middle. Now they were face to face, hugging each other like bears, but moving little. For a time things went thus, while Ospakar strove to lift Eric, but in nowise could he stir him. Then of a sudden Eric put out his strength, and they staggered round the ring, tearing at each other till their jerkins were rent from them. Suddenly, Eric seemed to give, and Ospakar put out his foot to trip him. But Bright-eyes was watching. He caught the foot in the crook of his left leg, and threw his weight forward on the chest of Blacktooth. Backward he went, falling with the thud of a tree on snow, and there he lay on the ground, and Eric over him.

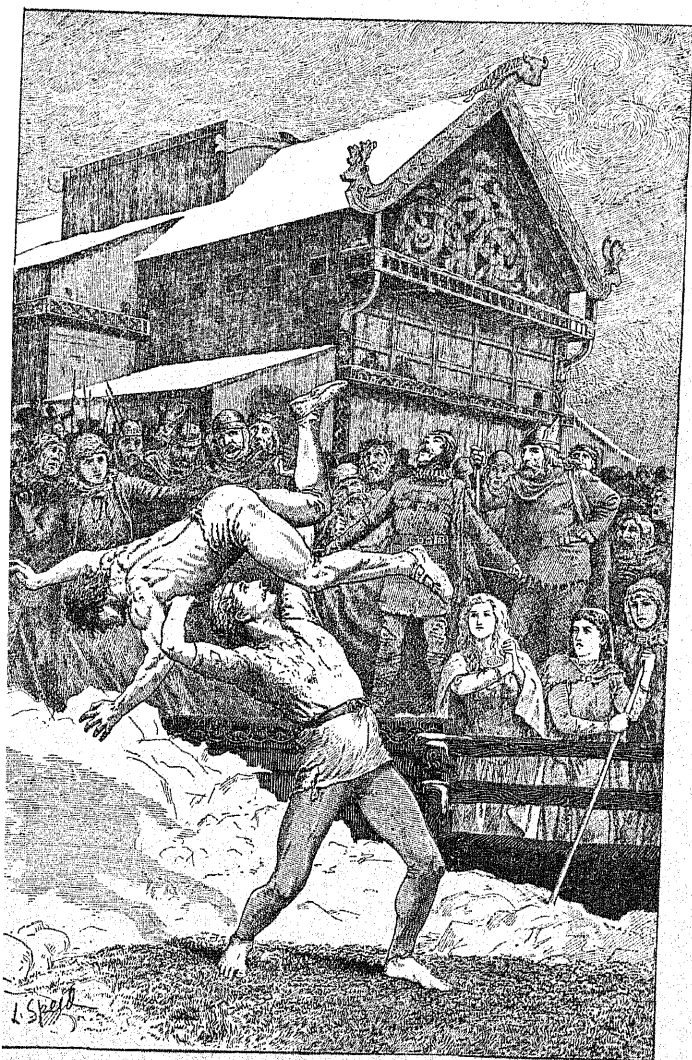
Then men shouted 'A fall! a fair fall!' and were very glad, for the fight seemed most uneven to them, and the wrestlers rolled asunder, breathing heavily.

Gudruda threw a cloak over Eric's shoulders.

'That was well done, Brighteyes,' she said.

'The game is still to play, sweet,' he gasped, 'and Ospakar is a mighty man. I threw him by skill, not by strength. Next time it must be by strength or not at all.'

Now breathing-time was done, and once more the two were face to face. Thrice Ospakar rushed, and thrice did Eric slip away, for he would waste Blacktooth's strength. Again Ospakar rushed, roaring like a bear, and fire seemed to come from his eyes, and the steam went up from him and hung upon the frosty air like the steam of a horse. This time Eric could not get away, but was swept up into that great grip, for Ospakar had the lower hold.



'Now there is an end of Eric,' said Swanhild.

'The arrow is yet on the bow,' answered Gudruda.

Blacktooth put out his might and reeled round and round the ring, dragging Eric with him. This way and that he twisted, and time on time Eric's leg was lifted from the ground, but so he might not be thrown. Now they stood almost still, while men shouted madly, for no such wrestling had been known in the southlands. Grimly they hugged and strove: forsooth it was a mighty sight to see. Grimly they hugged, and their muscles strained and cracked, but they could stir each other no inch.

Ospakar grew fearful, for he could make no play with this youngling. Black rage swelled in his heart. He ground his fangs, and thought on guile. By his foot gleamed the naked foot of Eric. Suddenly he stamped on it so fiercely that the skin burst.

'Ill done! ill done!' folk cried; but in his pain Eric moved his foot.

Lo! he was down, but not altogether down, for he did but sit upon his haunches, and still he clung to Blacktooth's thighs, and twined his legs about his ankles. Now with all his strength Ospakar strove to force the head of Brighteyes to the ground, but still he could not, for Eric clung to him like a creeper to a tree.

'A losing game for Eric,' said Asmund, and as he spoke Brighteyes was pressed back till his yellow hair almost swept the sand.

Then the folk of Ospakar shouted in triumph, but Gudruda cried aloud:

'Be not overthrown, Eric; loose thee and spring aside.'

Eric heard, and of a sudden loosed all his grip. He fell on his outspread hand, then, with a swing sideways and a bound, once more he stood upon his feet. Ospakar came at him like a bull made mad with goading, but he could no longer roar aloud. They closed and this time Eric had the better hold. For a while they struggled round and round till their feet tore the frozen turf, then once more they stood face to face. Now the two were almost spent; yet Blacktooth gathered up his strength and swung Eric from his feet, but he found them again. He grew mad with rage, and hugged him till Brighteyes was nearly pressed to death, and black bruises showed upon the whiteness of his flesh. Ospakar grew mad, and madder yet, till at length in his fury he fixed his fangs in Eric's shoulder and bit till the blood spurted.

'Ill kissed, thou rat!' gasped Eric, and with the pain and rush of blood, his strength came back to him. He shifted his grip swiftly, and now his right hand was beneath the fork of Blacktooth's thigh and his left on the hollow of Blacktooth's back. Twice he lifted—twice the bulk of Ospakar rose from the ground—a third mighty lift—so mighty that the wrapping on Eric's forehead burst, and the blood streamed down his face—and lo! great Blacktooth flew in air. Up he flew, and backward he fell into the bank of snow, and was buried there almost to the knees.

From 'Eric Brighteyes,' by H. RIDER HAGGARD.

8. HORATIUS

Lord Macaulay (Thomas Babington Macaulay), one of our most famous historians, was born in 1800. After gaining distinction at Cambridge, he was called to the bar in 1824. In the same year his article on Milton appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*. Some of his most famous essays followed, on Lord Clive, Warren Hastings, and the two on William Pitt and the Earl of Chatham. He also wrote the historical poem *Ivry*, and the *Lays of Ancient Rome*. His *History of England* was never finished. He lived to see four volumes appear; the fifth was published after his death, which occurred in 1859. His works are remarkable for the purity of the language employed. Every sentence is thoroughly English, expressing in the simplest and purest way the thoughts of the writer.

1. But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.
'Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?'
2. Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
'To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods?
3. 'Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.

In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me ?'

4. Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
'Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee.'
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
'I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee.'
5. 'Horatius,' quoth the Consul,
'As thou sayest, so let it be.'
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.
6. Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.



THE SARDON PALATINE HORATIUS THE WOLF-PORCH OF HIS HOME

7. Now while the Three were tightening
 Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
 To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons,
 Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
 And loosed the props below.
8. Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
 Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
 Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
 A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
 Where stood the dauntless Three.
9. The Three stood calm and silent,
 And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
 From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
 Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
 To win the narrow way.
10. But now no sound of laughter
 Was heard among the foes;
A wild and wrathful clamour
 From all the vanguard rose.

Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

11. But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.
12. He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, 'The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?'
13. Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

14. He reeled, and on Herminius
 He leaned one breathing-space;
 Then, like a wild-cat mad with wounds,
 Sprang right at Astur's face.
 Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
 So fierce a thrust he sped,
 The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
 Behind the Tuscan's head.
15. And the great Lord of Luna
 Fell at that deadly stroke,
 As falls on Mount Alvernus
 A thunder-smitten oak.
 Far o'er the crashing forest
 The giant arms lie spread;
 And the pale augurs, muttering low,
 Gaze on the blasted head.
16. But meanwhile axe and lever
 Have manfully been plied;
 And now the bridge hangs tottering
 Above the boiling tide.
 'Come back, come back, Horatius!
 Loud cried the Fathers all;
 'Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
 Back, ere the ruin fall!'
17. Back darted Spurius Lartius;
 Herminius darted back:
 And, as they passed, beneath their feet
 They felt the timbers crack.
 But when they turned their faces,
 And on the farther shore
 Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
 They would have crossed once more.

18. But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream:
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

19. And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

20. Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
'Down with him!' cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
'Now yield thee,' cried Lars Porsena,
'Now yield thee to our grace.'

21. Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he;

But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

22. 'Oh, Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!'
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

23. No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

24. But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armour,
And spent with changing blows;
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

25. Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing-place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
Bore bravely up his chin.
26. 'Curse on him!' quoth false Sextus;
'Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!'
'Heaven help him!' quoth Lars Porsena,
'And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before.'
27. And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.
28. They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

29. It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

LORD MACAULAY.

9. THE CUTTING-OUT OF THE 'CHEVRETTE'

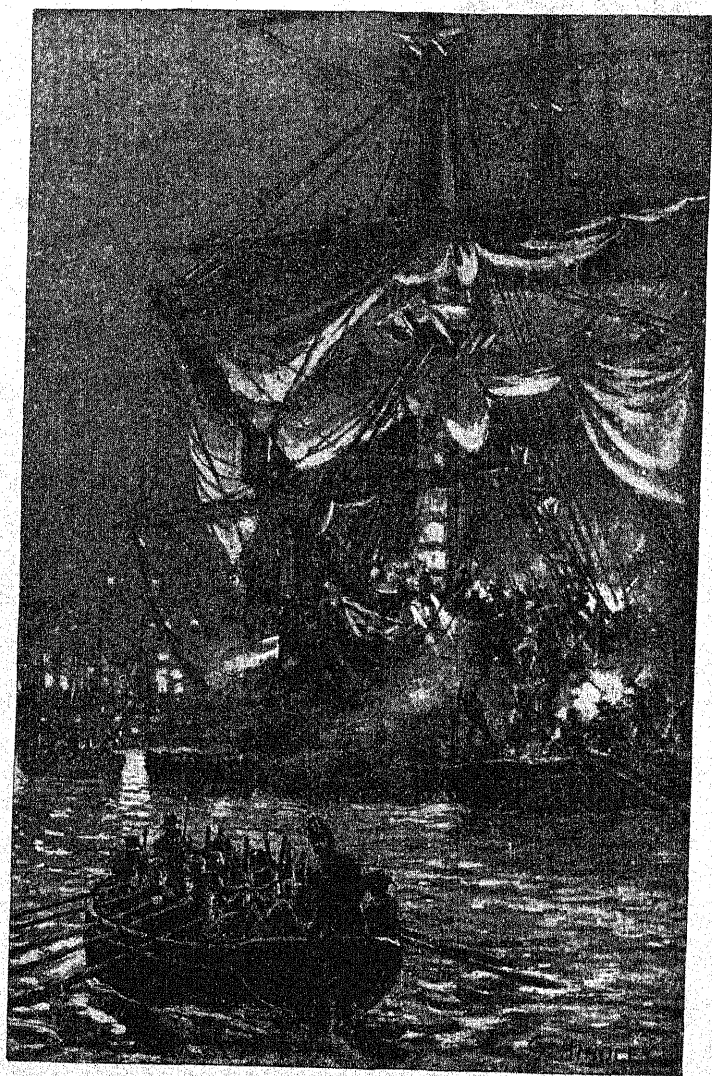
The Rev. W. H. Fitchett has written many books about the great deeds of the British army and navy, among the best known of which are *Deeds that Won the Empire*, *Fights for the Flag*, *The Tale of the Great Mutiny*, *Wellington's Men*, and *Nelson and his Captains*.

Perhaps the most brilliant cutting-out in British records is the carrying of the *Chevrette* by the boats of three British frigates in Cameret Bay in 1801. A previous and mismanaged attempt had put the *Chevrette* on its guard; it ran a mile and a half farther up the bay, moored itself under some heavy batteries, took on board a powerful detachment of infantry, bringing its number of men up to 339, and then hoisted in defiance a large French ensign over the British flag. Some temporary redoubts were thrown up on the points of land commanding the *Chevrette*, and a heavily armed gunboat was moored at the entrance of the bay as a guard boat. After all these preparations the *Chevrette's* men felt both safe and jubilant; but the sight of that French flag flying

over the British ensign was a challenge not to be refused, and at half-past nine that night the boats of the three frigates—the *Doris*, the *Uranie*, and the *Beaulieu*—fifteen in all, carrying 280 officers and men, were in the water and pulling off to attack the *Chevrette*.

Lieutenant Losack, in command, with his own and five other boats, suddenly swung off in the gloom in chase of what he supposed to be the lookout boat of the enemy, ordering the other nine boats to lie on their oars till he returned. But time stole on; he failed to return; and Lieutenant Maxwell, the next in command, reflecting that the night was going, and the boats had six miles to pull, determined to carry out the expedition, though he had only nine boats and less than 180 men, instead of fifteen boats and 280 men. He summoned his little squadron in the darkness about him, and gave exact instructions. As the boats dashed up, one was to cut the *Chevrette's* cables; when they boarded, the smartest topmen, named man by man, were to fight their way aloft and cut loose the *Chevrette's* sails; one of the finest sailors in the boats, Wallis, the quartermaster of the *Beaulieu*, was to take charge of the *Chevrette's* helm. Thus at one and the same instant the *Chevrette* was to be boarded, cut loose, its sails dropped, and its head swung round towards the harbour mouth.

At half-past twelve the moon sank. The night was windless and black; but the bearing of the *Chevrette* had been taken by compass, and the boats pulled gently on, till, ghost-like in the gloom, the



doomed ship was discernible. A soft air from the land began to blow at that moment. Suddenly the *Chevrette* and the batteries overhead broke into flame. The boats were discovered. The officers leapt to their feet in the stern of each boat, and urged the men on. The leading boats crashed against the *Chevrette's* side. The ship was boarded simultaneously on both bows and quarters. The force on board the *Chevrette*, however, was numerous enough to make a triple line of armed men round the whole sweep of its bulwarks. They were armed with pikes, tomahawks, cutlasses, and muskets, and they met the attack most gallantly, even venturing in their turn to board the boats. By this time, however, the nine boats Maxwell was leading had all come up, and although the defence outnumbered the attack by more than two to one, yet the British were not to be denied. They clambered fiercely on board; the topmen raced aloft, found the foot-ropes on the yards all strapped up, but running out, cutlass in hand, they cut loose the *Chevrette's* sails. Wallis, meanwhile, had fought his way to the wheel, slew two of the enemy in the process, was desperately wounded himself, yet stood steadily at the wheel, and kept the *Chevrette* under command, the batteries by this time opening upon the ship a fire of grape and heavy shot.

In less than three minutes after the boats came alongside, although nearly every second man of their crews had been killed or wounded, the three topsails and courses of the *Chevrette* had fallen, the cables had been cut, and the ship was moving out in the darkness. She leaned over to the light breeze, the

ripple sounded louder at her stem, and when the French felt the ship under movement, it for the moment paralysed their defence. Some jumped overboard; others threw down their arms and ran below. The fight, though short, had been so fierce that the deck was simply strewn with bodies. Many of the French who had retreated below renewed the fight there; they tried to blow up the quarter-deck with gunpowder in their desperation, and the British had to fight a new battle between decks with half their force while the ship was slowly getting under weigh. The fire of the batteries was furious, but, curiously enough, no important spar was struck, though some of the boats towing alongside were sunk. And while the batteries thundered overhead, and the battle still raged on the decks below, the British seamen managed to set every sail on the ship, and even got top-gallant yards across. Slowly the *Chevrette* drew out of the harbour. Just then some boats were discovered pulling furiously up through the darkness; they were taken to be French boats bent on recapture, and Maxwell's almost exhausted seamen were summoned to a new conflict. The approaching boats, however, turned out to be the detachment under Lieutenant Losack, who came up to find the work done and the *Chevrette* captured.

The fight on the deck of the *Chevrette* had been of a singularly deadly character. The British had a total loss of eleven killed and fifty-seven wounded; the *Chevrette* lost ninety-two killed and sixty-two wounded, among the slain being the *Chevrette's* captain, her two lieutenants, and three midshipmen.

Many stories are told of the daring displayed by British seamen in this attack. The boatswain of the *Beaulieu*, for example, boarded the *Chevrette's* taffrail; he took one glance along the crowded decks, waved his cutlass, shouted 'Make a lane there!' and literally carved his way through to the forecastle, which he cleared of the French, and kept clear, in spite of repeated attacks, while he assisted to cast the ship about and make sail with as much coolness as though he had been on board the *Beaulieu*. Wallis, who fought his way to the helm of the *Chevrette*, and, though wounded, kept his post with iron coolness while the fight raged, was accosted by his officer when the fight was over with an expression of sympathy for his wounds. 'It is only a prick or two, sir,' said Wallis, and he added he 'was ready to go out on a similar expedition the next night.' A boatswain's mate named Ware had his left arm cut clean off by a furious slash of a French sabre, and fell back into the boat. With the help of a comrade's tarry fingers Ware bound up the bleeding stump with rough but energetic surgery, climbed with his solitary hand on board the *Chevrette*, and played a most gallant part in the fight.

*From 'Deeds that Won the Empire,' by W. H. FITCHETT.
By kind permission of the author and the publishers, Messrs.
SMITH, ELDER, & Co.*

10. A SEA-FIGHT

Walt Whitman (1818-1892) was one of the most famous American poets of the last century. In contrast to the accepted forms of poetic composition, his poems are written in a style entirely his own, which few imitators can handle with success. His various works are published under the titles of *Leaves of Grass*, *Drum Taps*, *Democratic Vistas*, *November Boughs*, &c., &c.

Would you hear of an old-time sea-fight?

Would you learn who won by the light of the
moon and stars?

List to the yarn, as my grandmother's father the
sailor told it to me.

4 'Our foe was no skulk in his ship, I tell you
(said he),

His was the surly English pluck, and there is no
tougher or truer, and never was, and never will be;
Along the lowered eve he came horribly raking us.

We closed with him, the yards entangled, the
cannon touched,

8 My captain lashed fast with his own hands.

We had received some eighteen-pound shots
under the water,

On our lower-gun-deck two large pieces had
burst at the first fire, killing all around and
blowing up overhead.

Fighting at sun-down, fighting at dark,

12 Ten o'clock at night, the full moon well up, our
leaks on the gain, and five feet of water reported,
The master-at-arms loosing the prisoners confined
in the after-hold to give them a chance for
themselves.

The transit to and from the magazine is now
stopt by the sentinels,
They see so many strange faces they do not
know whom to trust.

16 Our frigate takes fire,
The other asks if we demand quarter?
If our colours are struck and the fighting done?
Now I laugh content, for I hear the voice of my
little captain,

20 "We have not struck," he composedly cries, "we
have just begun our part of the fighting."

Only three guns are in use,
One is directed by the captain himself against
the enemy's main-mast,
Two well served with grape and canister silence
his musketry and clear his decks.

24 The tops alone second the fire of this little
battery, especially the main-top,
They hold out bravely during the whole of the action.

Not a moment's cease,
The leaks gain fast on the pumps, the fire eats
toward the powder-magazine.

28 One of the pumps has been shot away, it is
generally thought we are sinking.

Serene stands the little captain,
He is not hurried, his voice is neither high nor low,
His eyes give more light to us than our battle-
lanterns.

32 Toward twelve, there in the beams of the moon,
they surrender to us.'

WALT WHITMAN.

II. THE ELF MAIDEN

PART I

Once upon a time, two young men who lived in a small village fell in love with the same maiden. In the northern latitudes, when winter has taken the land in its icy grip, darkness occupies the greater part of the twenty-four hours. Then each of these young men used to vie with the other as to who could tempt her out in his sleigh, to gallop over the country beneath the flash of the Northern Lights, while the snow hissed beneath the swift-moving runners.

When spring came, and the days grew longer, the heart of every villager leaped with the morning sun. The ice thawed upon the sea, and a day was fixed for the boats to be taken from their houses, and the great nets spread on the shore to dry.

The flat bays of some islands that lay to the north were used as a fishing ground, and one morning the whole village set out in their boats upon the annual fishing expedition.

The maiden and her friends fished daily from the same boat as the two young men. As time went on, one of them noticed that the girl began to show more favour to his rival, and he determined that when the chance came he would find some way of reinstating himself in her good graces. So he waited patiently till their return to the mainland for the winter.

The summer came to an end at last, and in the bustle and hurry of departure, the cunning fisherman arranged that their boat should be the last to put off. When everything was ready, and the sails about to be set, he suddenly called out to his friend:

‘I have left my best knife behind in the hut. Run, like a good fellow, and get it for me, while I hoist the sail.’

The youth jumped back on shore at once, and made his way up the steep bank. At the door of the hut he stopped and looked back. He was filled with horror to find that the boat was standing out to sea, and that he was left alone on the island.

He put the knife in his pocket and went off to a part of the island where stood a small grove of trees. From one of these he cut himself a bow, which he strung with a piece of cord that had been left lying about the huts.

With this bow, and arrows which he cut from saplings, he was able to shoot sea-birds, and keep body and soul together.

On Christmas Eve, as soon as his task of gathering wood was done, he paused and looked out towards the mainland, thinking of Christmas last year, and the merry dances they had had. The night was still and cold, and by the help of the Northern Lights he could almost see across to the opposite coast. Suddenly he noticed a boat steering straight for the island. At first he could hardly believe his good fortune; but as the boat



"You will have to make me your wife," said the Elf-maiden.

drew near, and he saw that people filled it, he could no longer doubt. Hastily he stepped behind the wood stack, and waited to see what would happen next.

The strange folk, each bearing a load, one by one jumped on to the rocks. Among the women he remarked two young girls, more beautiful and better dressed than any of the rest, carrying between them two great baskets of provisions.

Their sharp eyes soon discovered the form of a man crouching behind the bundle of sticks, and at first they felt a little frightened, and started as if they would run away. But the youth remained so still, that they took courage and laughed gaily to each other. 'What a strange creature, let us try what he is made of!' said one, and she stooped down and gave him a pinch.

Now the young man had a pin sticking in the sleeve of his jacket, and the moment the girl's hand touched him it pricked her so sharply that the blood came. The girl screamed loudly, and the people who had come with her, directly they caught sight of the strange man, picked up their goods and vanished with their boat from the island for ever.

12. THE ELF MAIDEN

PART II

In their hurry they had, however, forgotten the girl whom the pin had pricked. She now stood pale and helpless beside the wood stack.

'You will have to make me your wife,' she said at last, 'for you have drawn my blood, and I belong to you.'

'Why not? I am quite willing,' answered he. 'But how do you suppose we can manage to keep alive till summer comes round again?'

'Do not be anxious about that,' said the girl. 'I am very rich, and there will be no difficulty about food.'

The girl was as good as her word, and all through the winter months there was a plentiful supply of food upon the island. Whence it came the husband never knew.

'Where are we to go now?' asked the girl, one day, when the sun seemed brighter and the wind softer than usual. 'I should like to build a house at the other end of the island, away from the huts of the fisher folk.'

In a tiny bay, on the opposite side of the island, the two found a spot that seemed to have been made on purpose for them. Tired with their long walk, they laid themselves down on a bank of moss beneath some birches, there to have a good night's rest, so as to be fresh for work next day. But before she went to sleep the girl turned to her husband and said: 'If in your dreams you fancy that you hear strange noises, be sure you do not stir, or get up to see what it is.'

'Oh, it is not likely we shall hear any noises in such a quiet place,' answered he, and fell sound asleep.

Suddenly he was awakened by a great clatter

about his ears, as if all the workmen in the world were sawing and hammering and building close to him. He was just going to spring up and go to see what it meant, when he remembered his wife's words and lay still. But the time till morning seemed very long, and with the first ray of sun they both rose, and pushed aside the branches of the birch trees. There, in the very place they had chosen, stood a beautiful house!

'Now you must fix on a spot for your cow stalls,' said the girl, when they had breakfasted off wild cherries; 'and take care it is the proper size, neither too large nor too small.' The husband did as he was bid, though he wondered what use a cow-house could be to them, when they had no cows to put in it. But as he was a little afraid of his wife, who knew so much more than he, he asked no questions.

This night also he was awakened by strange sounds, and in the morning they found near the stream the best-equipped cow-house that ever was seen. There were stalls, milk-pails, and stools, indeed everything that a cow-house could possibly want, except the cows.

Then the girl bade him measure out the ground for a store-house, and this, she said, might be as large as he pleased. The store-house ready, she proposed that they should set off to pay her parents a visit.

The old people welcomed them heartily, and summoned their neighbours to a great feast in their honour. In fact, for several weeks there was

no work done on the farm at all; and at length the young man and his wife grew tired of so



much play, and declared that they must return to their own home.

Before they started on the journey, the wife whispered to her husband: 'Take care to jump over the threshold as quick as you can, or it will be the worse for you.'

The obedient young man, when the time came, sprang over the threshold like an arrow from a bow; and it was well he did, for, no sooner was he on the other side, than his father-in-law threw a great hammer at him, which would certainly have broken both his legs, if it had touched them.

When they had gone some distance on the road home, the girl turned to her husband and said: 'Till you step inside the house, be sure you do not look back, whatever you may hear or see.'

The husband promised, and for a while all went smoothly. He had quite forgotten the matter, till he began to notice that the nearer he drew to the house the louder grew a noise of the trampling of feet behind him. As he laid his hand upon the door he thought he was safe, and turned to look. There, sure enough, was a vast herd of cattle, which his father-in-law had been obliged to send when he found that his daughter had outwitted him. Half of the herd were already through the fence, and safely cropping the grass on the banks of the stream. The half of the herd, however, that still remained outside faded into nothing as he watched them.

Enough cattle were still left to make the young man rich, and things went on without a hitch, except that every now and then the girl vanished

and would not tell him where she had been. For a long time he kept silence about it; but one day, when he had been complaining of her absence, she said to him: 'Dear husband, I am bound to go, even against my will, and there is only one way to stop me. Drive a nail into the threshold, and then I can never pass in or out.'

This he did.

From 'The Brown Fairy Book.'

13. VITAI LAMPADA

Henry John Newbolt. Mr. Newbolt's fame chiefly rests on the striking series of poems he has written, the first of which was *Admirals All*, published in *Longman's Magazine* in 1894, and issued with other poems in book form in 1897. He is gifted, as few writers are, with a power of stirring the patriotic feelings of his readers.

1. There's a breathless hush in the Close to-night—
Ten to make and the match to win—
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote,
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'
2. The sand of the desert is sodden red,—
Red with the wreck of a square that broke;—
The Gatling's jammed and the colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks,
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

3. This is the word that year by year
While in her place the School is set
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.
This they all with a joyful mind
Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind—
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

HENRY NEWBOLT. (*By kind permission.*)

14. TOM PINCH'S RIDE TO LONDON

PART I

Charles Dickens, one of the most popular of English novelists, was born at Portsmouth in 1812. After a childhood of hardships and privations, he was placed in a lawyer's office. Attracted by literature he began by writing and reporting for the newspapers. His reputation as a novelist and humorist was made on the publication of *Sketches by Boz* in 1836, and was greatly increased in the following year, when *Pickwick Papers* appeared. On the establishment of the *Daily News* he was appointed chief editor. Charles Dickens was as much loved by his personal friends as he was admired by his readers, being genial and generous in a rare degree. The best known of his many books are *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and the *Pickwick Papers*. He died at Gad's Hill, near Rochester, June 9, 1870, and his remains were interred in Westminster Abbey. His friend, John Forster, published 'The Life of Charles Dickens' in 1871-74.

It was a charming evening. Mild and bright. And even with the weight upon his mind which arose out of the immensity and uncertainty of London, Tom could not resist the captivating sense of rapid motion through the pleasant air. The four greys skimmed along, as if they liked it quite as well as Tom did; the bugle was in as high spirits as the greys; the coachman chimed in sometimes

with his voice; the wheels hummed cheerfully in unison; the brass-work on the harness was an orchestra of little bells; and thus, as they went clinking, jingling, rattling, smoothly on, the whole concern, from the buckles of the leaders' coupling-reins, to the handle of the hind boot, was one great instrument of music.

Yoho, past hedges, gates, and trees; past cottages and barns, and people going home from work. Yoho, past donkey-chaises, drawn aside into the ditch, and empty carts with rampant horses, whipped up at a bound upon the little watercourse, and held by struggling carters close to the five-barred gate, until the coach had passed the narrow turning in the road. Yoho, by churches dropped down by themselves in quiet nooks, with rustic burial-grounds about them, where the graves are green, and daisies sleep—for it is evening—on the bosoms of the dead. Yoho, past streams, in which the cattle cool their feet, and where the rushes grow; past paddock-fences, farms, and rick-yards; past last year's stacks, cut, slice by slice, away, and showing, in the waning light, like ruined gables, old and brown. Yoho, down the pebbly dip, and through the merry water-splash, and up at a canter to the level road again. Yoho! Yoho!

Was the box there, when they came up to the old finger-post? The box! Was Mrs. Lupin herself? Had she turned out magnificently as a hostess should, in her own chaise-cart, and was she sitting in a mahogany chair, driving her own horse Dragon (who ought to have been called Dimpling), and

looking lovely? Did the stage-coach pull up beside her, shaving her very wheel, and even while the



guard helped her man up with the trunk, did he send the glad echoes of his bugle careering down

the chimneys of the distant Pecksniff, as if the coach expressed its exultation in the rescue of Tom Pinch?

'This is kind indeed!' said Tom, bending down to shake hands with her. 'I didn't mean to give you this trouble.'

'Trouble, Mr. Pinch!' cried the hostess of the Dragon.

'Well! It's a pleasure to you, I know,' said Tom, squeezing her hand heartily. 'Is there any news?'

The hostess shook her head.

'Say you saw me,' said Tom, 'and that I was very bold and cheerful, and not a bit down-hearted; and that I entreated her to be the same, for all is certain to come right at last. Good-bye!'

'You'll write when you get settled, Mr. Pinch?' said Mrs. Lupin.

'When I get settled!' cried Tom, with an involuntary opening of his eyes. 'Oh, yes, I'll write when I get settled. Perhaps I had better write before, because I may find that it takes a little time to settle myself: not having too much money, and having only one friend. I shall give your love to the friend, by the way. You were always great with Mr. Westlock, you know. Good-bye!'

'Good-bye!' said Mrs. Lupin, hastily producing a basket with a long bottle sticking out of it. 'Take this. Good-bye!'

'Do you want me to carry it to London for you?' cried Tom. She was already turning the chaise-cart round.

'No, no,' said Mrs. Lupin. 'It's only a little

something for refreshment on the road. Sit fast, Jack. Drive on, sir. All right! Good-bye!

She was a quarter of a mile off, before Tom collected himself; and then he was waving his hand lustily; and so was she.

'And that's the last of the old finger-post,' thought Tom, straining his eyes, 'where I have so often stood, to see this very coach go by, and where I have parted with so many companions! I used to compare this coach to some great monster that appeared at certain times to bear my friends away into the world. And now it's bearing me away, to seek my fortune, Heaven knows where and how!'

It made Tom melancholy to picture himself walking up the lane and back to Pecksniff's as of old; and being melancholy, he looked downwards at the basket on his knee, which he had for the moment forgotten.

'She is the kindest and most considerate creature in the world,' thought Tom. 'Now I *know* that she particularly told that man of hers not to look at me, on purpose to prevent my throwing him a shilling! I had it ready for him all the time, and he never once looked towards me; whereas that man naturally (for I know him very well), would have done nothing but grin and stare. Upon my word, the kindness of people perfectly melts me.'

Here he caught the coachman's eye. The coachman winked. 'Remarkable fine woman for her time of life,' said the coachman.

'I quite agree with you,' returned Tom. 'So she is.'

'Finer than many a young one, I mean to say,' observed the coachman. 'Eh?'

'Than many a young one,' Tom assented.

'You'll seldom find 'em possessing correct opinions about refreshment, for instance, when they're too young, you know,' said the coachman: 'a woman must have arrived at maturity, before her mind's equal to coming provided with a basket like that.'

'Perhaps you would like to know what it contains?' said Tom, smiling.

As the coachman only laughed, and as Tom was curious himself, he unpacked it, and put the articles, one by one, upon the footboard. A cold roast fowl, a packet of ham in slices, a crusty loaf, a piece of cheese, a paper of biscuits, half-a-dozen apples, a knife, some butter, a screw of salt, and a bottle of old sherry. There was a letter besides, which Tom put in his pocket.

From this time they chatted so pleasantly together, that although Tom knew infinitely more of unicorns than horses, the coachman informed his friend the guard, at the end of the next stage, 'that rum as the box-seat looked, he was as good a one to go, in point of conversation, as ever he'd wished to sit by.'

15. TOM PINCH'S RIDE TO LONDON

PART II

Yoho, among the gathering shades; making of no account the deep reflections of the trees, but scampering on through light and darkness, all the

same, as if the light of London fifty miles away, were quite enough to travel by, and some to spare. Yoho, beside the village-green, where cricket-players linger yet, and every little indentation made in the fresh grass by bat or wicket, ball or player's foot, sheds out its perfume on the night. Away with four fresh horses from the Bald-faced Stag, where toppers congregate about the door admiring; and the last team, with traces hanging loose, go roaming off towards the pond, until observed and shouted after by a dozen throats, while volunteering boys pursue them. Now with a clattering of hoofs and striking out of fiery sparks, across the old stone bridge, and down again into the shadowy road, and through the open gate, and far away, away, into the wold. Yoho!

Yoho, behind there, stop that bugle for a moment! Come creeping over to the front, along the coach-roof, guard, and make one at this basket! Not that we slacken in our pace the while, not we: we rather put the bits of blood upon their mettle, for the greater glory of the snack. Ah! It is long since this bottle of old wine was brought into contact with the mellow breath of night, you may depend, and rare good stuff it is to wet a bugler's whistle with. Only try it. Don't be afraid of turning up your finger, Bill, another pull! Now, take your breath, and try the bugle, Bill. There's music! There's a tone! 'Over the hills and far away,' indeed. Yoho! The skittish mare is all alive to-night. Yoho! Yoho!

See the bright moon! High up before we know

it: making the earth reflect the objects on its breast like water. Hedges, trees, low cottages, church steeples, blighted stumps and flourishing young slips, have all grown vain upon the sudden, and mean to contemplate their own fair images till morning. The poplars yonder rustle, that their quivering leaves may see themselves upon the ground. Not so the oak; trembling does not become *him*; and he watches himself in his stout old burly steadfastness, without the motion of a twig. The moss-grown gate, ill poised upon its creaking hinges, crippled and decayed, swings to and fro before its glass; while our own ghostly likeness travels on, Yoho! Yoho! through ditch and brake, upon the ploughed land and the smooth, along the steep hill-side and steeper wall, as if it were a phantom-Hunter.

Clouds too! And a mist upon the Hollow! Not a dull fog that hides it, but a light airy gauze-like mist, which in our eyes of modest admiration gives a new charm to the beauties it is spread before. Yoho! Why, now we travel like the Moon herself. Hiding this minute in a clump of trees; next minute in a patch of vapour; emerging now upon our broad clear course; withdrawing now, but always dashing on, our journey is a counterpart of hers. Yoho! A match against the Moon. Yoho, yoho!

The beauty of the night is hardly felt, when Day comes leaping up. Yoho! Two stages, and the country roads are almost changed to a continuous street. Yoho, past market-gardens, rows of houses, villas, crescents, terraces, and squares; past waggons, coaches, carts; past early workmen, late stragglers,

drunken men, and sober carriers of loads; past brick and mortar in its every shape; and in among the rattling pavements, where a jaunty-seat upon a coach is not so easy to preserve! Yoho, down countless turnings, and through countless mazy ways, until an old Inn-yard is gained, and Tom Pinch, getting down, quite stunned and giddy, is in London!

‘Five minutes before the time, too!’ said the driver, as he received his fee of Tom.

‘Upon my word,’ said Tom, ‘I should not have minded very much, if we had been five hours after it; for at this early hour I don’t know where to go, or what to do with myself.’

‘Don’t they expect you then?’ inquired the driver.

‘Who?’ said Tom.

‘Why, them,’ returned the driver.

His mind was so clearly running on the assumption of Tom’s having come to town to see an extensive circle of anxious relations and friends, that it would have been pretty hard work to undeceive him. Tom did not try. He cheerfully evaded the subject, and going into the Inn fell fast asleep before a fire in one of the public rooms opening from the yard. When he awoke, the people in the house were all astir, so he washed and dressed himself; to his great refreshment after the journey; and, it being by that time eight o’clock, went forth at once to see his old friend John.

From ‘Martin Chuzzlewit,’ by CHARLES DICKENS.

16. THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE AT BALACLAVA. October 25, 1854

Lord Tennyson. Alfred Tennyson was born at his father's parsonage of Somerby, Lincolnshire, in 1809. He was educated, at first by his father, and afterwards at Trinity College, Cambridge. Upon the death of Wordsworth, Tennyson, who had published *In Memoriam* the previous year, was made Poet Laureate. His poems are notable for their finish and symmetry, and some of his songs are among the most beautiful in the English language. Tennyson's first volume of poems was published in 1830, and after the appearance of *The Princess* in 1847, there followed *In Memoriam* and *Maud*, and in 1859 *The Idylls of the King*, which secured to him the fame and popularity that continued to his death (1892). Tennyson was made a peer in 1884. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

I

The charge of the gallant three hundred, the
Heavy Brigade!

Down the hill, down the hill, thousands of
Russians,

Thousands of horsemen, drew to the valley—
and stay'd;

4 For Scarlett and Scarlett's three hundred were
riding by

When the points of the Russian lances arose in
the sky;

And he call'd 'Left wheel into line!' and they
wheel'd and obey'd.

Then he looked at the host that had halted he
knew not why,

8 And he turn'd half round, and he bade his
trumpeter sound

To the charge, and he rode on ahead, as he
waved his blade

To the gallant three hundred whose glory will
never die—

‘Follow,’ and up the hill, up the hill, up the
hill,

12 Follow’d the Heavy Brigade.

II

The trumpet, the gallop, the charge, and the
might of the fight.

Thousands of horsemen had gather’d there on
the height,

With a wing push’d out to the left and a wing
to the right,

16 And who shall escape if they close? but he
dash’d up alone

Thro’ the great grey slope of men,
Sway’d his sabre, and held his own
Like an Englishman there and then;

20 All in a moment follow’d with force
Three that were next in their fiery course,
Wedge’d themselves in between horse and horse,
Fought for their lives in the narrow gap they
had made—

24 Four amid thousands! and up the hill, up the
hill,

Gallop’d the gallant three hundred, the Heavy
Brigade.

III

Fell like a cannonshot,
Burst like a thunderbolt,

28 Crash’d like a hurricane,
Broke thro’ the mass from below,

- Drove thro' the midst of the foe,
Plunged up and down, to and fro,
32 Rode flashing blow upon blow,
Brave Inniskillens and Greys
Whirling their sabres in circles of light!
And some of us, all in amaze,
36 Who were held for a while from the fight,
And were only standing at gaze,
When the dark-muffled Russian crowd
Folded its wings from the left and the right,
40 And roll'd them around like a cloud,—
O mad for the charge and the battle were we,
When our own good redcoats sank from sight,
Like drops of blood in a dark-grey sea,
44 And we turn'd to each other, whispering, all
dismay'd,
'Lost are the gallant three hundred of Scarlett's
Brigade!'

IV

- 'Lost one and all' were the words
Mutter'd in our dismay;
48 But they rode like Victors and Lords
Thro' the forest of lances and swords
In the heart of the Russian Hordes,
They rode, or they stood at bay—
52 Struck with the sword-hand and slew,
Down with the bridle-hand drew
The foe from the saddle and threw
Underfoot there in the fray—
56 Ranged like a storm or stood like a rock
In the wave of a stormy day;
Till suddenly shock upon shock

- Stagger'd the mass from without,
60 Drove it in wild disarray,
For our men gallopt up with a cheer and a shout,
And the foemen surged, and waver'd, and reel'd
Up the hill, up the hill, up the hill, out of the field,
64 And over the brow and away.

V

Glory to each and to all, and the charge that they made!

Glory to all the three hundred, and all the Brigade!

LORD TENNYSON.

17. THE WOLF AND THE BADGER

PART I

When all was ready her charioteer took the reins and settled himself upon the little seat behind the sleigh, which was then led into line by a soldier servant.

'Where is the course, Señor?' Lysbeth asked, hoping that it would be a short one.

But in this she was to be disappointed, for he answered:

'Up to the little Quarkel Mere, round the island in the middle of it, and back to this spot, something over a league in all. Now, Señora, speak to me no more at present, but hold fast and have no fear, for at least I drive well, and my horse is sure-footed

and roughed for ice. This is a race that I would give a hundred gold pieces to win, since your countrymen, who contend against me, have sworn that I shall lose it, and I tell you at once, Señora, that grey horse will press me hard.'

Following the direction of his glance, Lysbeth's eye lit upon the next sledge. It was small, fashioned and painted to resemble a grey badger, that silent, stubborn, and, if molested, savage brute, which will not loose its grip until the head is hacked from off its body. The horse, which matched it well in colour, was of Flemish breed; rather a raw-boned animal, with strong quarters and an ugly head, but renowned in Leyden for its courage and staying power.

What interested Lysbeth most, however, was to discover that the charioteer was none other than Pieter van de Werff, though now when she thought of it, she remembered he had told her that his sledge was named the Badger. In his choice of passenger she noted, too, not without a smile, that he showed his cautious character, disdainful of any immediate glory, so long as the end in view could be attained. For there in the sleigh sat no fine young lady, decked out in brave attire, who might be supposed to look at him with tender eyes, but a little fair-haired mate aged nine, who was in fact his sister. As he explained afterwards, the rules provided that a lady passenger must be carried, but said nothing of her age and weight.

Now the competitors, eight of them, were in a line, and coming forward, the master of the course,

in a voice that every one might hear, called out the conditions of the race and the prize for which it was to be run, a splendid glass goblet engraved with the cross-keys, the Arms of Leyden. This done, after asking if all were ready, he dropped a little flag, whereon the horses were loosed and away they went.

Before a minute had passed, forgetting all her doubts and annoyances, Lysbeth was lost in the glorious excitement of the moment. Like birds in the heavens, cleaving the keen, crisp air, they sped forward over the smooth ice. The gay throng vanished, the dead reeds and stark bushes seemed to fly away from them. The only sounds in their ears were the rushing of the wind, the swish of the iron runners, and the hollow tapping of the hooves of their galloping horses. Certain sledges drew ahead in the first burst, but the Wolf and the Badger were not among these.

The Count de Montalvo was holding in his black stallion, and as yet the grey Flemish gelding looped along with a constrained and awkward stride. When, passing from the little mere, they entered the straight of the canal, these two were respectively fourth and fifth. Up the course they sped, through a deserted snow-clad country, past the church of the village of Alkemaade. Now, half a mile or more away appeared the Quarkel Mere, and in the centre of it the island which they must turn.

They reached it, they were round it, and when their faces were once more set homewards, Lysbeth noted that the Wolf and the Badger were third and fourth in the race, some one having dropped behind.

Half a mile more and they were second and third ; another half mile and they were first and second, with perhaps a mile to go. Then the fight began.

18. THE WOLF AND THE BADGER

PART II

Yard by yard the speed increased, and yard by yard the black stallion drew ahead. Now in front of them lay a furlong or more of bad ice encumbered with lumps of frozen snow that had not been cleared away, which caused the sleigh to shake and jump as it struck. Lysbeth looked round.

'The Badger is coming up,' she said.

Montalvo heard, and for the first time laid his whip upon the haunches of his horse, which answered gallantly. But still the Badger came up. The grey was the stronger beast, and had begun to put out his strength. Presently his ugly head was behind them, for Lysbeth felt the breath from his nostrils blowing on her, and saw their steam. Then it was past, for the steam blew back into her face ; yes, and she could see the eager eyes of the child in the grey sledge. Now they were neck and neck, and the rough ice was done with. Six hundred yards away, not more, lay the goal, and all about them, outside the line of the course, were swift skaters travelling so fast that their heads were bent forward and down to within three feet of the ice.

Van de Werff called to his horse, and the grey began to gain. Montalvo lashed the stallion, and once more they passed him. But the black was



failing, and he saw it, for Lysbeth heard him growl in Spanish. Then of a sudden, after a cunning glance at his adversary, the Count pulled upon the right rein, and a shrill voice rose upon the air, the voice of the little girl in the other sledge.

'Take care, brother,' it cried, 'he will overthrow us.'

True enough, in another moment the black would have struck the grey sideways. Lysbeth saw Van de Werff rise from his seat and throw his weight backward, dragging the grey on to his haunches. By an inch—not more—the Wolf sleigh missed the horse. Indeed, one runner of it struck his hoof, and the high woodwork of the side brushed and cut his nostril.

'A foul, a foul!' yelled the skaters, and it was over. Once more they were speeding forward, but now the black had a lead of at least ten yards, for the grey must find his stride again. They were in the straight; the course was lined with hundreds of witnesses, and from the throats of every one of them arose a great cry, or rather two cries.

'The Spaniard, the Spaniard wins!' said the first cry, that was answered by another and a deeper roar.

'No, Hollander, the Hollander! The Hollander comes up!'

Then in the midst of that fierce excitement—bred of the excitement perhaps—some curious spell fell upon the mind of Lysbeth. The race, its details, its objects, its surroundings faded away; these physical things were gone, and in place of them

was present a dream, a spiritual interpretation such as the omens and influences of the times she lived in might well inspire. What did she seem to see?

She saw the Spaniard and the Hollander striving for victory, but not a victory of horses. She saw the black Spanish Wolf, at first triumphant, outmatch the Netherland Badger. Still, the Badger, the dogged Dutch badger, held on.

'Who would win?' The fierce beast or the patient beast? Who would be master in this fight? There was death in it. Look, the whole snow was red, the roofs of Leyden were red, and red the heavens; in the deep hues of the sunset they seemed bathed in blood, while about her the shouts of the backers and factions transformed themselves into a fierce cry as of battling peoples. All voices mingled in that cry—voices of hope, of agony, and of despair; but she could not interpret them. Something told her that the interpretation and the issue were in the mind of God alone.

Perhaps she swooned, perhaps she slept and dreamed this dream; perhaps the sharp rushing air overcame her. At the least Lysbeth's eyes closed and her mind gave way. When they opened and it returned again their sledge was rushing past the winning post. But in front of it travelled another sledge, drawn by a gaunt grey horse, which galloped so hard that its belly seemed to lie upon the ice, a horse driven by a young man whose face was set like steel and whose lips were as the lips of a trap.

'Could that be the face of her cousin Pieter

van de Werff, and, if so, what feelings had stamped that strange seal thereon?' She turned herself in her seat and looked at him who drove her.

Was this a man, or was it a spirit escaped from doom? The eyeballs starting and upturned, nothing but the white of them to be seen; the lips curled, and, between, two lines of shining fangs; the lifted points of the mustachios touching the high cheek-bones. No—no, it was neither a spirit nor a man, she knew now what it was; it was the very type and incarnation of the Spanish Wolf.

Once more she seemed to faint, while in her ears there rang the cry—'The Hollander! Outstayed! Outstayed! Conquered is the accursed Spaniard!'

Then Lysbeth knew that it was over, and again the faintness overpowered her.

From 'Lysbeth,' by H. RIDER HAGGARD.

19. AN INCIDENT IN THE SCOTTISH WARS

PART I

We crossed valley and stream by tracks we knew well by this time, and as it happened, went further that day than any other, for one could see nothing but a few yards of stony track before one, and the cries of the curlews sounded wild round us, like the whistle of men to one another in the fog.

'What water is that I hear?' I said presently. There was a sound of a heavy rushing, but I knew of no brook here that would make that sound.

'It is more like the sound of a great flock of

sheep,' answered Alan, 'but we have driven every one for miles.'

Then our horses pricked their ears, and stared into the mist to our right front in a way that told us that other horses were near.

Alan held up his hand, 'I hear voices!' he said. We listened, and presently I knew that what we heard was the thunder of the feet of a vast host of men, and now and then a voice came faintly, though whence we knew not, for nothing confuses sound so much as fog.

'The Scots!' said Alan, turning to me with his eyes shining under his helm.

'It is not possible,' I said; 'how could they find their way through this mist?'

'Any shepherd they have caught could guide them. Anyhow, we must see if I am right.'

'Let us ride back to camp and give the alarm,' I said.

'And be laughed at—for every one would say as you, that it is not possible. And all believe that the foe has halted. Bide here while I ride on, and if I shout 'De Courci!' ride back for your life and give the alarm.'

'Faith,' said I, 'where you go, I go. If we cannot see them, neither can they see us. We may get near enough to hear what tongue they speak, and that is all we need.'

'Come then,' said Alan.

So we rode, as the keener senses of our horses bade us, down the hill towards our right more or less. We had to leave the pathway, but in returning

we could not miss it if we breasted the hill anywhere, for it ran all along its crest. At the foot of the long hill we stayed again and listened, and now the sound of the marching host was deadened, because they were yet beyond some rising land.

What happened next was sudden, and took us unawares, for all the warning we had was a little crackle of deerskin-shod feet, and the snorting and restlessness of our horses.

Out of the mist seemed to grow half-a-dozen men silently and swiftly, and for a moment I sat and stared at them in amazement. They were the wild scouts of the enemy, the tartan-clad Pictish men of Galloway, belted with long claymores, shield on back, and spear or pole-axe in hand.

They halted suddenly, each where he stood and as he stood, staring at us, startled maybe as we were. Then one whistled shrilly, and cried in an eager voice, 'Claymore!' and their weapons clashed as they went on guard and made for us in silence.

The whistle rang clear and echoed back, and then came a long roar of voices, and the sound of marching swelled up for a moment and then ceased altogether. The host had halted at the first sign of the enemy.

One minds all these things when in peril, and even as I noted this, Alan leapt forward and snatched at my horse's bridle, swinging him round.

'Back!' he said. 'What, are you dreaming? We have seen enough.'

But a Scot was hanging on the other rein also, and only the plunging of the horse saved me from a blow from his long-handled axe.

'Be off, Alan,' I cried; 'I am hindered.' And I drew sword and cut at the man who held me back, only wasting a good blow on his hide target.

But he left the horse's head and I turned him, to find that the wild figures were swarming round us, and that Alan was wheeling his great charger in a circle that no Scot dared enter.

'Uphill,' he cried, seeing that I was free.

Then we spurred the horses and charged side by side, and they yelled and fell back before us. They feared the horses, and were unused to fighting with mounted men, and we won through them easily and galloped on up the hill.

20. AN INCIDENT IN THE SCOTTISH WARS

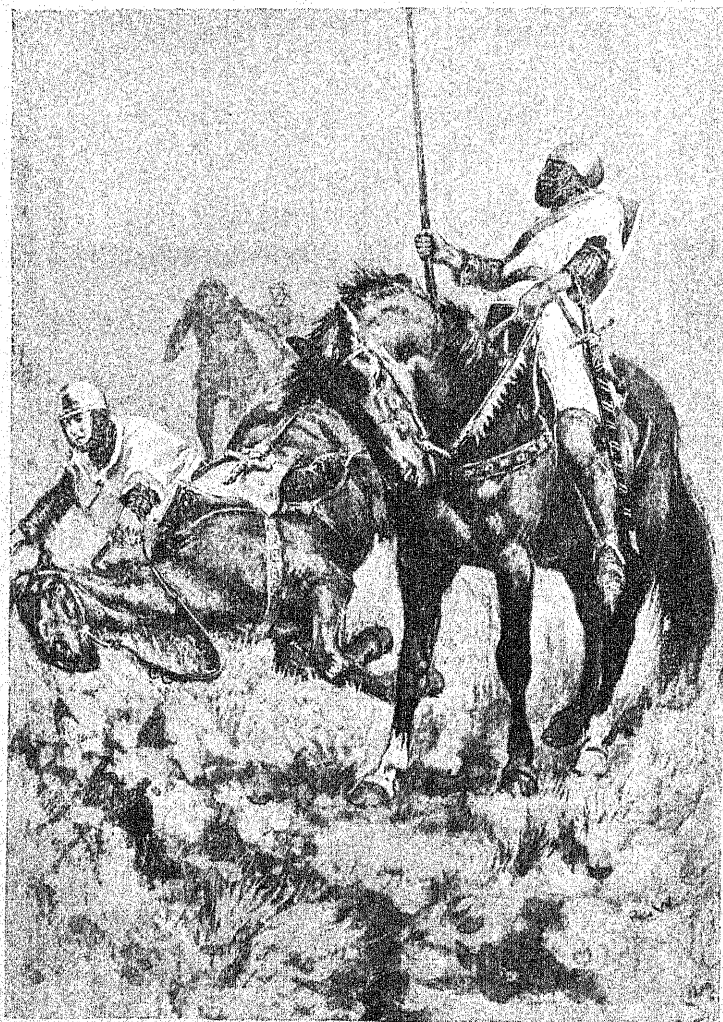
PART II

Nevertheless the men of the heather were not to be shaken off so easily, but ran and leapt on either side of us, and as they ran, I saw one or two who had unslung bows, and were waiting, arrow on string, for a chance shot at us.

We began to distance them very soon, and at last only two grey figures strained to keep pace with us, and then an arrow rattled on Alan's mail, shot from not more than five paces' range.

'A weak bow enough,' said Alan.

But if the Scottish bow was weak against mail, it could harm a horse, for the next thing that I knew was that my good steed was down on his nose among the stones, and I was lying half stunned before



him, while those two wild Galloway kernes shouted and rushed at me.

Alan had shot on ahead as I fell, but in a moment he was round and back, saving me from the dirk of one man who was almost on me, with a quick lance-thrust. The other man, who was not so near, fled as he came, and we were alone. Alan dismounted and came to my help.

'Are you hurt?' he said, lifting me.

'Not much,—but the horse—how about him?' I asked.

'Not much either—for he has gone.'

And indeed he had picked himself up and fled into the mist towards the foe.

'Mount behind me,' said Alan, helping me up. Then I groaned and reeled against him. My ankle was sorely bruised by a rock on which it had been dashed in my fall, and at that time I thought it was broken, for I could not stand.

'Hold up, and I will help you mount,' said Alan. And then the Galloway men swarmed out of the fog again, cautiously at first. Some waft of wind had thinned the hanging clouds for a moment, and Alan saw them sooner than before.

'Leave me—warn the camp,' I said.

'The honour of a De Govet——'

And that was the last I heard of what Alan was about to say, for with the first step towards the saddle I fainted.

When I came to, with the cold air rushing on me, the first thing I saw was Alan's steadfast face above me, stern set and anxious, but unfaltering in

gaze forward, and under me bounded the free stride of his great charger as though the double burden was nothing. Alan's left arm was round me, and I was across his saddle, while he was mounted behind it. He had no helm, and a stream of blood was across his face, and an arrow, caught by the point in the rings of his mail, rattled from his breast. His lance was gone, and his red sword hung by the sling from his wrist as he managed the bridle.

I stirred, and a smile came on his grim face.

'Art thyself again?' he said. 'We are close on the camp.'

Then he lifted his voice and shouted—I had a dim remembrance then that that shout had rung in my ears just as I came round—the old war-cry of his forebears at Hastings—and our knight's name.

'De Courci—ho!'

And a murmur and then a shouting rose as our men heard and understood, and a dozen knights spurred forward to meet us and brought us in, scattering to take the news to the leaders as we passed the line of entrenchments, so that our tidings went before us.

Alan took me to our tents, and there was Sir Richard waiting, as he buckled on his sword. With him were two or three more knights, who gazed constantly at the mist as if trying to pierce it. The men were getting to their appointed posts as the alarm spread, with a quietness that told of anything but panic.

'Ho, Alan, you have been in close action,' our knight said anxiously. 'Are you or Ralph hurt?'

'A brush with some wild Galloway kernes, nought more,' Alan answered, lowering me carefully into the strong grasp of Jehan of Stowey. "Have a care of the hurt foot, Jehan. That is all that is amiss, Sir Richard.'

But I could not have Alan's doings set aside, and I told Sir Richard plainly how he had rescued me from the swarm of wild men who followed us.

Then came one whom I knew well by sight, our leader, the Earl of Albemarle, eager to hear from the mouth of Alan himself what he had learnt of the Scots.

And even as Alan told him, the mist began to lift under a breeze that sprang up. The white hanging cloud-wreaths fled up the hillsides whence we had ridden, and left them clear and bright—and already on the nearer rises the Galloway scouts were posted, and our pickets were coming in at full speed.

Then the Earl grasped Alan's hand and said—

'No time for more now—but you have saved a panic, and what comes therefrom. I will see you hereafter, if we both outlive this day; and if I fall and you do not, I will have left orders concerning you with others.'

From 'Yule Logs,' edited by G. A. HENTY.

21. A MAN OVERBOARD

PART I

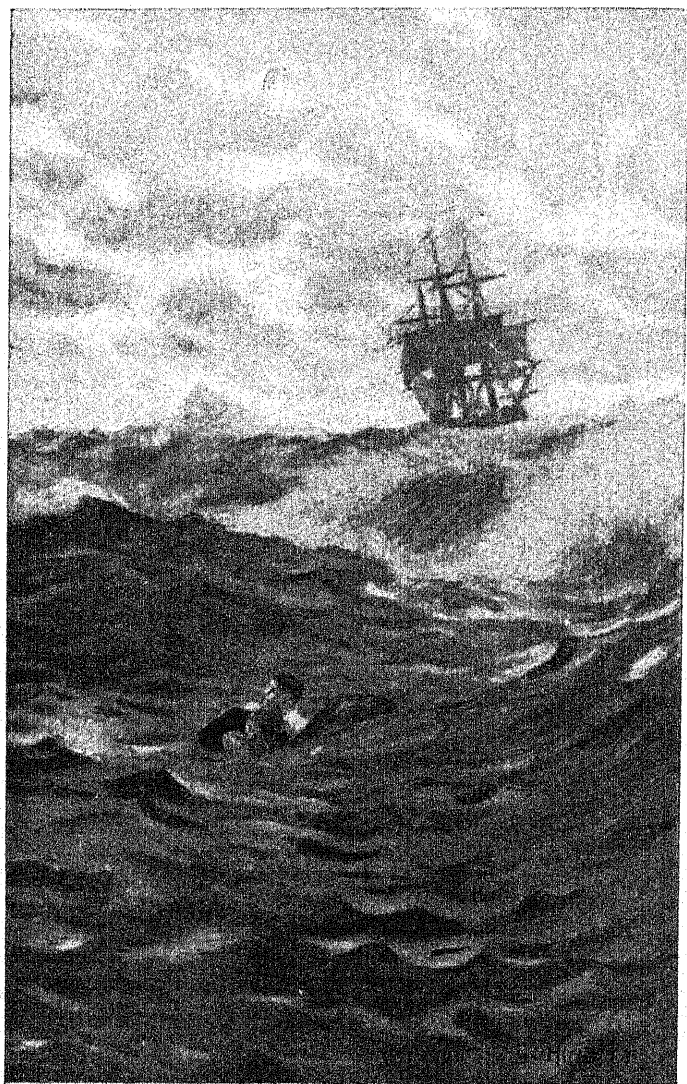
William Henry Giles Kingston, a grandson of Sir Giles Rooke, was born in 1814. His newspaper articles contributed to the conclusion of our commercial treaty with Portugal in 1842. He wrote many books for boys, the best known being **Peter the Whaler** and **The Three Midshipmen** series, the fortunes of the midshipmen being continued in successive books until they became full admirals. He died in 1880.

The midshipmen were aroused by the cry of 'All hands shorten sail!' The boatswain's whistle had not ceased sounding along the decks before Jack and Murray were on their way aloft, the first to the fore, the other to the main-top, where they were stationed.

A heavy squall had struck the frigate, and she was heeling over with her main-deck ports almost in the water. Up they flew with the topmen to their respective stations, while the officer of the watch was shouting through his speaking-trumpet, 'Let go top-gallant halyards. Clew up, haul down.'

Then came, 'Let fly topsail halyards. Clew up. Round in the weather braces.'

Down came the yards on the caps. The sails were now bulging out and shaking in the wind. Out flew the active topmen to the yard-arms. Jack, as he had often before done, ran out to get hold of the weather earing. He was hauling away on it while the men hauled the reef over to him. He had already taken two outer turns with it, when, as he leaned back, he felt himself suddenly thrown from his hold. In vain he tried to clutch



the earing; it slipped through his fingers. Head-long he came down, striking the leech of the sail. Mechanically he clutched at that. Probably it broke his fall. In another moment he was among the foaming waters, with the ship flying fast away from him.

Murray had meantime been watching to see which mast would have its sails first reefed, and as he looked forward he saw Jack fall from aloft. He guessed that he must have struck his head when falling, and that he would be senseless when he reached the water. In a moment his jacket and shoes were off, and down he slid like lightning by the topmast weather backstay, and, leaping into the water, swam towards the spot where Jack had fallen.

Captain Lascelles had seen the accident. He was on the poop. Stepping back, he himself let go the life-buoy, noting exactly the spot where the accident had occurred. But not an order did he give. Perfectly cool, he stood waiting till the sails were reefed. Murray meantime caught sight of Jack, who lay senseless on the water, to the surface of which he had just risen, after having once gone down from the force with which he had fallen into the sea. Murray dreaded lest he should again see him sink. He exerted all his strength to get up to him. The life-buoy was not far off. Had there been time, he would have first towed it up to Jack, but he was afraid if he did that he would in the meantime sink. Murray swam bravely on.

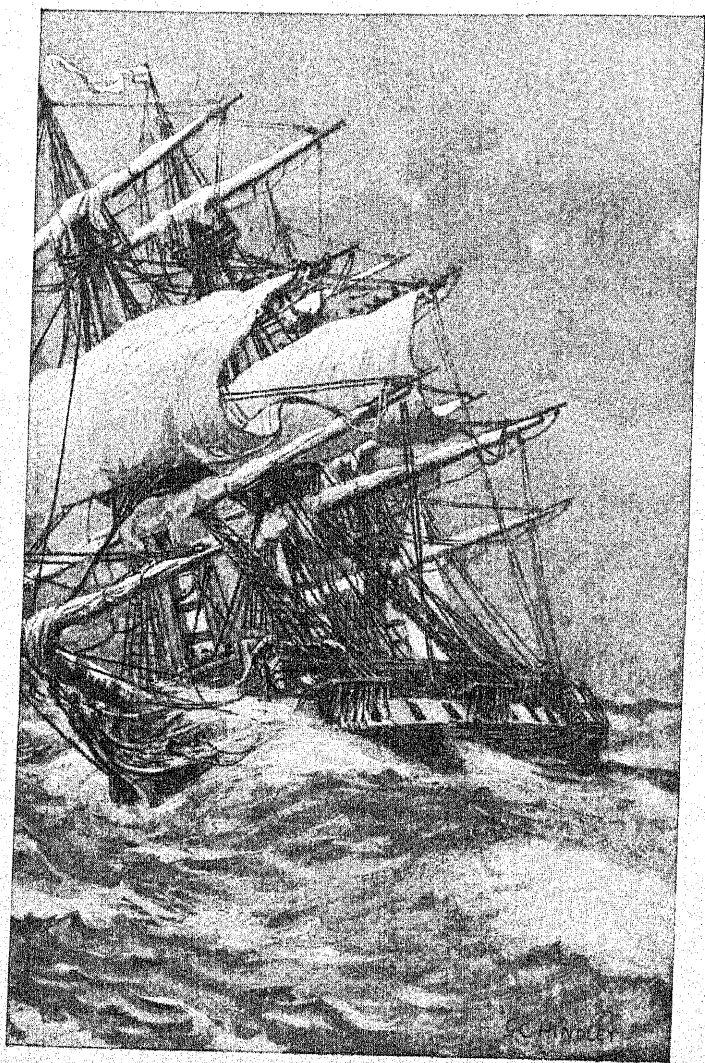
The foam, as the wind swept it off the surface

of the sea, dashed wildly in his face, but he kept his eye fixed steadily on Jack's head, that should he go down again, he might know exactly where to dive after him. Murray, under Jack's instruction, had been constantly practising swimming, and he now very nearly equalled his master in the art. His courage was as high, and what he wanted in muscular strength he made up by his undaunted spirit. He longed to know what had become of the frigate, but he would not turn his head to look. His first object was to get hold of Jack, and to keep his face out of the water, that, when animation returned, he might not be suffocated.

With steady strokes he swam on, admirably retaining his presence of mind. Every stroke was measured. There was no hurry, no bustle, with Murray; he knew that such would only bring worse speed. What an excellent example did he set of the way to attain an important object! Calmly eyeing it, and though clearly comprehending all the difficulties and dangers which surrounded him, with unswerving courage pushing towards his point. 'Keep up! keep up, Jack!' he sung out, but Jack did not hear him.

The seas, every moment increasing, came roaring towards him, while the foam dashed over his head. He surmounted them all. 'I am here, Jack! I am here!' he repeated, as he grasped Jack by the collar and turned him over on his back, so that his face might be uppermost.

A faint moan was all the reply Rogers gave.



22. A MAN OVERBOARD

PART II

It was satisfactory, as it assured Murray that he was alive. Now he looked round anxiously for the life-buoy. It had drifted away before the gale. But then he also had the wind in his favour, and he did not despair of overtaking it. With one hand supporting his shipmate, and with the other striking out, he swam steadily on as before towards the life-buoy.

Evening was coming on. Darkness he knew would soon overspread the sea. He knew that. He knew the difficulty there might be in finding him and his companion. A far more practised swimmer than he might have despaired, but he did not. Murray did not trust to his own right arm to save him. He looked to help from above. He knew if it was right it would be afforded him. If not, he was prepared to meet his fate.

Meantime, away flew the frigate. The moment the sails were reefed, the captain issued the orders he had been anxious to give, 'About ship,' 'Helm's alee.'

Never did the crew more strenuously exert themselves to box round the yards. They knew who was overboard, and the two midshipmen were favourites with all hands; Murray for the calm, gentlemanly, officer-like way in which he spoke to the men, and for the thorough knowledge of his duty he always displayed; Jack for his dash and

bravery, and the good spirits and humour with which he carried out any work allotted to him.

They now saw that neither was Murray wanting in dash and courage.

As the frigate was standing back towards the spot where the accident had occurred, preparations were made for lowering a boat. There was no hurry or confusion in this case. Her proper crew were called away. The second lieutenant took charge of her. Some people called Captain Lascelles a very strict officer. It is true he never overlooked a breach of discipline or carelessness of duty. He used to say that a breach of discipline, however trifling, if allowed to pass, was like a small leak, which, if permitted to continue, will go on increasing till the ship founders. Thus, among other good arrangements, every boat on board was kept in readiness to be lowered at a moment's notice, and everybody knew exactly what to do when a boat was to be lowered.

Captain Lascelles did not allow his feelings to appear; but he was intensely anxious about the fate of his two midshipmen. He would have given all the worldly wealth of which he was possessed to be assured that they would be saved. The thick clouds brought up by the gale increased the gathering gloom. Neither they nor the life-buoy could be seen.

He had carefully noted the exact course on which the frigate had run since they went overboard, so that he was able to calculate how to keep her, so as to fetch her back to the same spot. There

were also many sharp eyes on the look-out forward, endeavouring with all their might to discover the lost ones. In those southern latitudes darkness comes on with a rapidity unknown in lands blessed by a long twilight. Thus, before the frigate got up to the spot where the accident had occurred, the night had come down completely on the world of waters.

'I am afraid that the poor lads must be lost,' said the second to the first lieutenant. 'We ought to hear them or see something of them by this time.'

'Don't say that, Thorn,' answered the first lieutenant. 'Rogers is the midshipman who took the line on shore when the *Firefly* was wrecked; and Murray, though so quiet, is a very gallant fellow. They will do all that can be done to save themselves. I should indeed be deeply grieved if they were lost.'

There was a good deal of sea running at the time, but not enough to make the lowering of a boat a matter of danger if carefully performed.

'We'll heave the ship to, and lower a couple of boats to go in search of the lads,' observed the captain.

The first lieutenant issued the necessary orders, and the ship was brought up to the wind and hove-to. Mr. Thorn eagerly went to lower one of the boats. Hemming took charge of the other. Their respective crews sprang into them. The falls were properly tended and unhooked at the right moment, and, getting clear of the ship, they lay ready to

pull in whatever direction might be indicated. Here was the difficulty.

'Silence fore and aft,' sung out the captain. 'Does any one hear them?'

In an instant there was a dead silence. No one would have supposed that many hundred human beings were at that moment alive and awake on board the ship. Every one listened intently, but no sound was borne to their ears. Even Captain Lascelles began to give up all hope.

'The poor widowed mother, how will she bear it?' he muttered; 'and that honest country gentleman—it will be sad news I shall have to send him of his son.'

23. A MAN OVERBOARD

PART III

Scarcely had the captain thus given expression to his feelings, when a bright light burst forth amid the darkness some way to leeward. A shout arose from all on board. 'They must have got hold of the life-buoy, they must have got hold of the life-buoy,' was the cry. 'Hurrah! hurrah!' The two boats dashed away, with eager strokes, in the direction of the light.

Meantime Murray had towed Jack steadily on towards the buoy. He began to feel very weary though, and sometimes he thought that his strength would fail him. He looked at the buoy; it seemed a very long way off. He felt at last that he should

never be able to reach it. 'I'll not give in while life remains,' he said to himself. Just then his hand struck against something. He grasped it. It was a large piece of Spanish cork-wood. He shoved it under Jack's back, and rested his own left arm on it. He immediately found an immense advantage from the support it afforded. 'Who sent that piece of cork-wood to my aid?' he thought; 'it did not come by chance.' The assurance that he was not deserted gave him additional confidence. Jack also gave further signs of returning animation.

'Where am I?' he at length asked, in a tone of voice which showed that his senses were still confused.

'In the middle of the Mediterranean; but there's a life-buoy close at hand, and when we get hold of it we shall be all to rights,' answered Murray.

'What! is that you, Alick?' asked Jack. 'I remember now feeling that I was going overboard; but how came you here? Has the ship gone down?'

'No, no; all right; she'll be here to pick us up directly, I hope.'

'Then you jumped overboard to save me!' exclaimed Jack. 'Just like you, Alick; I knew you would do it.'

Jack lay perfectly still all the time he was talking. It did not seem to occur to him that he could swim as well as his companion.

'Here we are!' cried Murray; 'Heaven be praised—I was afraid that I should scarcely be able to make out the life-buoy, it is getting so dark.' He

placed Jack's hand in one of the becketts, and took another himself, and together they climbed up, and sat on the life-buoy. Murray drew the piece of cork up alongside, observing, 'I do not like to desert the friend which has been of so much service in our utmost need, and to kick it away without an acknowledgment.'

Jack laughed. He had now completely come to his senses. 'I'm very much obliged to you, Friend Cork,' said he, 'I know, Murray, what you are going to say; I am, indeed, thankful to Heaven for having thus far preserved me, and to you too, my dear fellow. But, I say, can you make out the ship?'

'Not a shred of her. I scarcely know in what quarter to look for her.'

'Well, then, all we shall have to do is to hang on here till daylight. The weather is warm, so we shall not come to much harm if the wind goes down again, and I am very certain the captain will come and look for us.'

'It may be a question whether he can find us, though,' said Murray. 'By-the-bye, I do not think that the buoy was fired. If we can find the trigger we will let it off, and that will quickly show our whereabouts.'

'A bright idea,' answered Jack. 'Hurrah! I've found it. Now blaze away, old boy.' Jack pulled the trigger as he spoke, and immediately an intensely bright bluish light burst forth above their heads, exhibiting their countenances to each other, with their hair streaming, lank and long, over their

faces, giving them at the same time a very cadaverous and unearthly appearance. Jack, in spite of their critical position, burst into a fit of laughter. 'Certainly, we do look as unlike two natty quarter-deck midshipmen as could well be,' he exclaimed. 'Never mind, we have not many spectators.'

Jack and Murray's coolness arose from the perfect confidence they felt that they would not be deserted while the slightest hope remained of their being found; and now that they had set off the port-fire they were almost as happy as if they were already safe on board. They had not much longer to wait. Presently a hail reached them; they shouted in return, and soon afterwards they saw a couple of boats emerging from the darkness. One took them on board—the other towed the life-buoy; and in half-an-hour more their wet clothes were off them, and they were being stowed away between the blankets in the sick bay, each of them sipping a pretty strong glass of brandy and water. Of course, when the excitement was over, a very considerable reaction took place, and several days passed before they were allowed to return to their duty.

From 'The Three Midshipmen,' by W. H. G. KINGSTON.
By kind permission of Messrs. GRIFFITH, FARRAN, BROWNE,
AND Co., LTD.

24. FORTY YEARS ON

Edward E. Bowen was born in 1836. After leaving Trinity College, Cambridge, he went for a short time to Marlborough, and to Harrow as an assistant master in 1859. There he stayed till his death in 1901, devoting the whole of his energies to the welfare of the school and his boys. He was a fine athlete, and wrote the Harrow School songs, the most famous of all being **Forty Years On**.

1. Forty years on, when far and asunder,
Parted are those who are singing to-day,
When you look back and forgetfully wonder
What you were like in your work and your
play—

Then it may be there will often come o'er you
Glimpses of notes, like the catch of a song:
Visions of boyhood shall float them before you,
Echoes of dreamland shall bear them along.

Follow up! Follow up!
Till the field ring again and again
With the tramp of the twenty-two men—
Follow up! Follow up!

2. Routs and discomfitures, rushes and rallies,
Bases attempted and rescued and won,
Strife without anger, and art without malice—
How will it seem to you, forty years on?
Then, you will say, not a feverish minute
Strained the weak heart and the wavering
knee,
Never the battle raged hottest, but in it
Neither the last nor the faintest were we!
Follow up! etc.

3. O the great days, in the distance enchanted,
Days of fresh air in the rain and the sun,
How we rejoiced as we struggled and panted,
Hardly believable, forty years on!
How we discoursed of them, one with another,
Auguring triumph, or balancing fate,
Loved the ally with the heart of a brother,
Hated the foe with a playing at hate!
Follow up! etc.
4. Forty years on, growing older and older,
Shorter in wind, as in memory long,
Feeble of foot, and rheumatic of shoulder,
What will it help you that once you were
strong?
God give us bases to guard or beleaguer,
Games to play out, whether earnest or fun;
Fights for the fearless and goals for the eager,
Twenty and thirty and forty years on!
Follow up! etc.

E. E. BOWEN. (*By permission.*)

25. A BUSH FIRE

PART I

Henry Kingsley was a brother of Charles Kingsley. After leaving Worcester College, Oxford, in 1853, he sailed for Australia, and that country he made the scene of two of his best known books. Some consider him to have been in genius equal to his more famous brother; and probably **Geoffrey Hamlyn** is one of the finest pieces of fiction ever written. In 1870 he served as a war correspondent, and was present at the siege of Sedan. On his return to London he wrote a book which was the direct outcome of his war experiences. He died at Cuckfield, in Sussex, in May 1876, and was buried in Cuckfield churchyard. **Ravenshoe, Austin Elliot, The Hillyars and the Burtons, and Leighton Court**, were among his most successful books.

November set in burning hot, and by the tenth the grass was as dry as stubble; still we hoped for a thunder-storm and a few days' rain, but none came. December wore wearily on, and by Christmas the smaller creeks, except those which were snow-fed, were reduced to a few muddy pools, and vast quantities of cattle were congregated within easy reach of the river, from other people's runs, miles away.

Of course, feed began to get very scarce, yet we were hardly so badly off yet as our neighbours, for we had just parted with every beast we could spare, at high prices, to Port Phillip, and were only waiting for the first rains to start after store cattle, which were somewhat hard to get near the new colony.

No rain yet, and we were in the end of January; the fountains of heaven were dried up. But now all round the northern horizon the bush fires burnt continually, a pillar of smoke by day, and a pillar of fire by night.

Nearer by night, like an enemy creeping up to a beleaguered town. The weather had been very still for some time, and we took the precaution to burn great strips of grass all round the paddocks to the north; but, in spite of all our precautions, I knew that, should a strong wind come on from that quarter, nothing short of a miracle would save us.

But as yet the weather was very still, not very bright, but rather cloudy, and a dense haze of smoke was over everything, making the distances look ten times as far as they really were, and rendering the whole landscape as grey and melancholy as you can conceive. There was nothing much to be done, but to sit in the verandah, watching and hoping for a thunder-storm.

On the third of February the heat was worse than ever, but there was no wind; and as the sun went down among the lurid smoke, red as blood, I thought I made out a few white brush-shaped clouds rising in the north.

Jim and I sat there late, not talking much. We knew that if we were to be burnt out our loss would be very heavy; but we thanked God that even were we to lose everything it would not be irreparable, and that we should still be wealthy. Our brood mares and racing stock were our greatest anxiety. We had a good stack of hay, by which we might keep them alive for another month, supposing all the grass was burnt; but if we lost that our horses would probably die. I said at last—

‘Jim, we may make up our minds to have the run swept. The fire is burning up now.’

'Yes, it is brightening,' said he, 'but it must be twenty miles off still, and if it comes down with a gentle wind we shall save the paddocks and hay. There is a good deal of grass in the lower paddock. I am glad we had the forethought not to feed it down. Well, fire or no fire, I shall go to bed.'

We went to bed, and in spite of anxiety, mosquitoes, and heat, I fell asleep. In the grey morning I was awakened, nearly suffocated, by a dull continuous roar. It was the wind in the chimney. The north wind, so long imprisoned, had broken loose, and the boughs were crashing, and the trees were falling, before the majesty of his wrath.

I ran out, and met James in the verandah. 'It's all up,' I said. 'Get the women and children into the river, and let the men go up to windward with the sheep-skins to beat out the fire in the short grass. I'll get on horseback and go out and see how the Morgans get on. That obstinate fellow will wish he had come in now.'

Morgan was a stockman of ours, who lived, with a wife and two children, about eight miles to the northward. We always thought it would have been better for him to move in, but he had put it off, and now the fire had taken us by surprise.

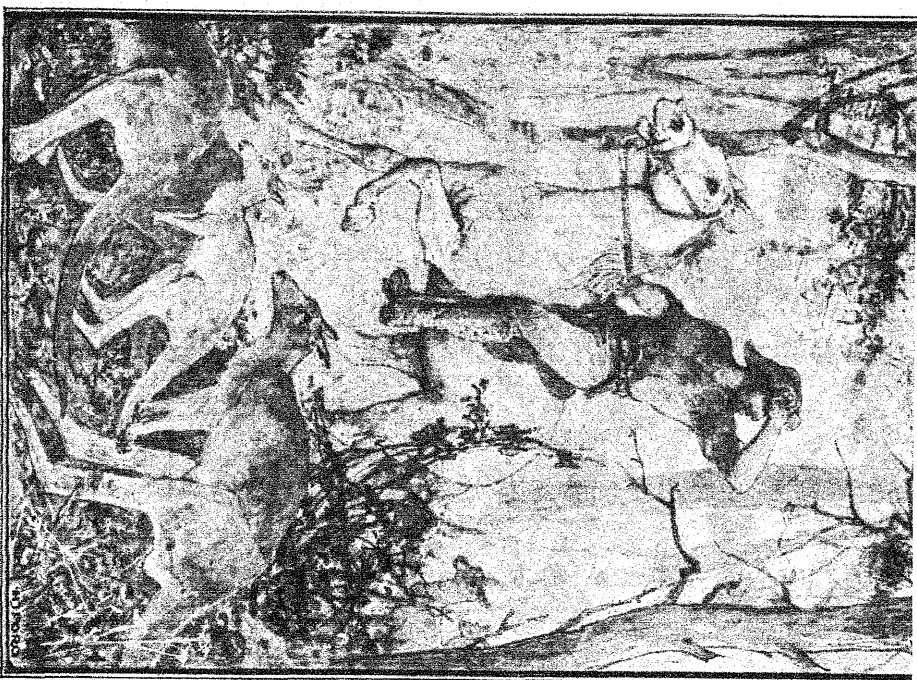
I rode away, dead-up wind. Our station had a few large trees about it, and then all was clear plain and short grass for two miles. I feared, from the density of the smoke, that the fire had reached them already; but I thought it my duty to go and see, for I might meet them fleeing, and help them with the children.

PART II

I had seen many bush fires, but never such a one as this. The wind was blowing a hurricane, and, when I had ridden about two miles into high scrub, I began to get frightened. Still I persevered, against hope; the heat grew more fearful every moment; but I reflected that I had often ridden up close to a bush fire, turned when I began to see the flame through the smoke, and cantered away from it easily.

Then it struck me that I had never yet seen a bush fire in such a hurricane as this. Then I remembered stories of men riding for their lives, and others of burnt horses and men found in the bush. And, now, I saw a sight which made me turn in good earnest.

I was in lofty timber, and, as I paused, I heard the mighty crackling of fire coming through the wood. At the same instant the blinding smoke burst into a million tongues of flickering flame, and I saw the fire—not where I had ever seen it before—not creeping along among the scrub—but up aloft, a hundred and fifty feet overhead. It had caught the dry tops of the higher boughs, and was flying along from tree-top to tree-top like lightning. Below, the wind was comparatively moderate, but, up there, it was travelling twenty miles an hour. I saw one tree ignite like gun-



cotton, and then my heart grew small, and I turned and fled.

I rode as I never rode before. There were three miles to go ere I cleared the forest and got among the short grass, where I could save myself—three miles! Ten minutes nearly of intolerable heat, blinding smoke, and mortal terror. Any death but this! Drowning were pleasant; glorious to sink down into the cool sparkling water! But to be burnt alive! I would give all my money now to be naked and penniless, rolling about in a cool pleasant river.

The maddened, terrified horse went like the wind, but not like the hurricane—that was too swift for us. The fire had outstripped us overhead, and I could see it dimly through the choking reek, leaping and blazing a hundred yards before us, among the feathery foliage, devouring it as the south wind devours the thunder-clouds. Then I could see nothing. Was I clear of the forest? Yes—I was riding over grass.

I managed to pull up the horse, and as I did so, a mob of kangaroos blundered by, blinded, almost against me, noticing me no more in their terror than if I had been a stump or a stone. Soon the fire came hissing along through the grass scarcely six inches high, and I walked my horse through it; then I tumbled off on the blackened ground, and felt as if I should die.

I lay there on the hot black ground. My head felt like a block of stone, and my neck was stiff, so that I could not move my head. My throat was

swelled and dry as a sand-hill, and there was a roaring in my ears like a cataract. I thought of the cool waterfalls among the rocks far away in Devon. I thought of everything that was cold and pleasant; and then came into my head about Dives praying for a drop of water. I tried to get up, but could not, so lay down again with my head upon my arm.

It grew cooler, and the atmosphere was clearer. I got up, and, mounting my horse, turned homeward. Now I began to think about the station. Could it have escaped? Impossible! The fire would fly a hundred yards or more such a day as this even in low plain. No, it must be gone! There was a great roll in the plain between me and home, so that I could see nothing of our place—all around the country was black, without a trace of vegetation. Behind me were the smoking ruins of the forest I had escaped from, where now the burnt-out trees began to thunder down rapidly, and before, to the south, I could see the fire raging miles away.

So the station is burnt, then? No! For as I top the ridge, there it is before me, standing as of old—a bright oasis in the desert of burnt country round. Ay! the very hay-stack is safe! And the paddocks?—all right!

I got home, and James came running to meet me.

‘I was getting terribly frightened, old man,’ said he. ‘I thought you were caught. You look ten years older than you did this morning!’

I tried to answer, but could not speak for

drought. He ran and got me a great tumbler of water; and in the evening, having drunk about a gallon, I felt pretty well revived.

Men were sent out at once to see after the Morgans, and found them perfectly safe, but very much frightened; they had, however, saved their hut, for the fire had passed before the wind had got to its full strength.

From 'The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn,'
by HENRY KINGSLEY.

27. NEW YEAR'S EVE

1. Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
2. Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.
3. Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

4. Ring out a slowly dying cause
 And ancient forms of party strife;
 Ring in the nobler modes of life
 With sweeter manners, purer laws.
5. Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
 The faithless coldness of the times;
 Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
 But ring the fuller minstrel in.
6. Ring out false pride in place and blood,
 The civic slander and the spite;
 Ring in the love of truth and right,
 Ring in the common love of good.
7. Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.
8. Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.

From 'In Memoriam,' by LORD TENNYSON

28. THE CAPTURE OF THE PRIVATEER

PART I

Captain Frederick Marryat, R.N., was born in 1786. He entered the navy at an early age, and, when lieutenant of the *Newcastle*, gained great distinction by cutting out four vessels in Boston Bay. Of his books, *The King's Own*, *Newton Forster*, and *Peter Simple* were among the first published, and the last is generally considered to be the best and most amusing of them. Jacob Faithful, Mr. Midshipman Easy, Masterman Ready, The Pacha of Many Tales, Japhet in Search of a Father, Poor Jack, and Percival Keene followed, and Marryat's literary powers were not abated until his death, which occurred at Langham, in Norfolk, August 9, 1848.

In the meantime Tom had gone up to the fore-royal yard, and was looking round for the five guineas, and just as the conversation was going on, cried out, 'Sail, ho!'

'Strange sail reported.'

'Where?' cried the first lieutenant, going forward.

'Right under the sun.'

'Mast-head there—do you make her out?'

'Yes, sir; I think she's a schooner, but I can only see down to her mainyard.'

'What do you make of her, Mr. Wilson?'

'A low schooner, sir, very rakish indeed, black sides. I cannot make out her ports—but I should think she can show a very pretty set of teeth. She is becalmed, as well as we.'

'Well, then, we must whistle for a breeze. In the meantime we will have the boats all ready.'

If you whistle long enough the wind is certain to come. In about an hour the breeze did come, and we took it down with us; but it was too dark

to distinguish the schooner, which we had lost sight of as soon as the sun had set. About midnight the breeze failed us, and it was again calm. The captain and most of the officers were up all night, and the watch were employed preparing the boats for service. It was my morning watch, and at break of day I saw the schooner from the foretop-sail-yard, about four miles to the NW. I ran down on deck, and reported her.

‘Very good, my lad. I have her, Mr. Knight,’ said the captain, who had directed his glass to where I pointed; ‘and I will have her too, one way or the other. No signs of wind. Lower down the cutters. We’ll wait a little, and see a little more of her when it’s broad daylight.’

At broad daylight the schooner was distinctly to be made out. She was pierced for sixteen guns, and was a formidable vessel to encounter with the boats. The calm still continuing, the launch, yawl, and pinnace were hoisted out, manned, and armed. The schooner got out her sweeps, and was evidently preparing for their reception. Still the captain appeared unwilling to risk the lives of his men in such a dangerous conflict, and there we all lay alongside, each man sitting in his place with his oar raised on end.

Cat-paws of wind, as they call them, flew across the water here and there, ruffling its smooth surface, telling us that a breeze would soon spring up, and the hopes of this chance rendered the captain undecided. Thus did we remain alongside, for Tom and I were stationed in the first and

second cutters, until twelve o'clock, when we were ordered out to take a hasty dinner.

At one it was still calm. Had we started when the boats were first hoisted out, the affair would have been long before decided. At last the captain, perceiving that the chance of a breeze was still smaller then than in the forenoon, ordered the boats to shove off. We were still about the same distance from the privateer, from three and a half to four miles.

In less than half-an-hour we were within gunshot; the privateer swept her broadside to us, and commenced firing guns with single round shot, and with great precision. They flew over the boats, and at every shot we made sure of our being struck. At this time a slight breeze swept along the water. It reached the schooner, filled her sails, and she increased her distance.

Again it died away, and we neared her fast. She swept round again, and recommenced firing, and one of her shot passed through the second cutter, in which I was stationed, ripping open three of her planks, and wounding two men beside me. The boat, heavy with the gun, immediately filled and turned over with us, and it was with difficulty that we could escape from the heavy things that were poured out of her.

One of the poor fellows, who had not been wounded, remained entangled under the boat, and never rose again. The remainder of the crew rose to the surface and clung to the side of the boat. The first cutter hauled to our assistance, but it

was three or four minutes before she was able to render us any help, during which time the other two wounded men, who had been apparently injured in the legs or body, exhausted with loss of blood, gradually unloosed their hold and disappeared under the calm, blue water.

I had received a splinter in my left arm, and held on longer than the others who had been maimed, but I could not hold on till the cutter came; I lost my recollection and sank. Tom, who was in the bow of the cutter, perceiving me to go down, dived after me, brought me up again to the surface, and we were both hauled in. The other five men were also saved.

As soon as we were picked up, the cutter followed the other boats, which continued to advance towards the privateer. I recovered my senses, and found that a piece of one of the thwarts of the boat, broken off by the shot, had been forced through the fleshy part of my arm below the elbow, where it still remained. It was a very dangerous as well as a painful wound. The officer of the boat, without asking me, laid hold of the splinter and tore it out, but the pain was so great that I again fainted. Fortunately no artery was wounded, or I must have lost my arm. They bound it up, and laid me at the bottom of the boat.

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29. THE CAPTURE OF THE PRIVATEER

PART II

The firing from the schooner was now very warm, and we were within a quarter of a mile of her, when the breeze sprang up, and she increased her distance a mile. There was a prospect of wind from the appearance of the sky, although, for a time, it again died away. We were within less than half a mile of the privateer, when we perceived that the frigate was bringing up a smart breeze, and rapidly approaching the scene of conflict.

The breeze swept along the water and caught the sails of the privateer, and she was again, in spite of all the exertions of our wearied men, out of gun-shot, and the first lieutenant very properly decided upon making for the frigate, which was now within a mile of us. In less than ten minutes the boats were hoisted in, and the wind now rising fast, we were under all sail, going at the rate of seven miles an hour; the privateer having also gained the breeze, and gallantly holding her own.

In less than an hour the wind had increased, so that we could with difficulty carry our royals; the privateer was holding her own about three miles right ahead, keeping our three masts in one. At sunset they were forced to take in the royals, and the sky gave every prospect of a rough gale. Still we carried on every stitch of canvas which the frigate could bear; keeping the chase in sight

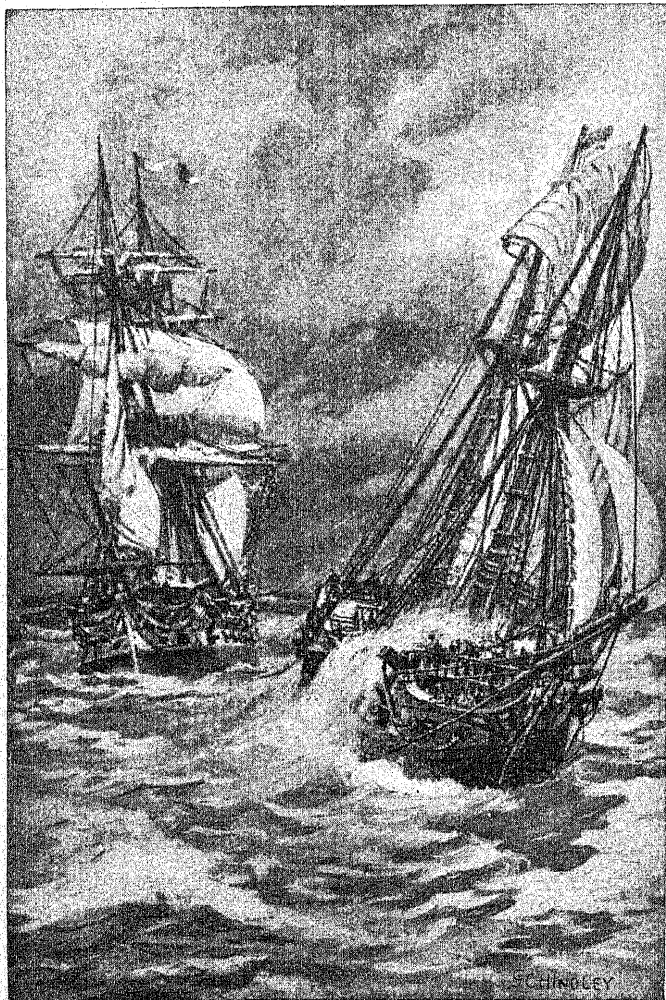
with our night glasses, and watching all her motions.

The breeze increased; before morning there was a heavy sea, and the frigate could only carry top-gallant sails over double-reefed topsails. At daylight we had neared the schooner about a quarter of a mile, and the captain and officers went down to take some repose and refreshment, not having quitted the deck for twenty-four hours.

All that day did we chase the privateer, without gaining more than a mile upon her, and it now blew up a furious gale; the top-gallant sails had been before taken in; the topsails were close-reefed, and we were running at the speed of nearly twelve miles an hour; still, so well did the privateer sail, that she was barely within gunshot when the sun went down below the horizon, angry and fiery red.

There was now great fear that she would escape, from the difficulty of keeping the glasses upon her during the night, in a heavy sea, and the expectation that she would furl all and allow us to pass her. It appeared, however, that this manœuvre did not enter into the head of the captain of the privateer; he stood on under a press of sail which even in daytime would have been considered alarming; and at daylight, owing to the steering during night never being so correct as during the day, she had recovered her distance, and was about four miles from us. The gale, if anything, had increased, and Captain Maclean determined, notwithstanding, to shake a reef out of the topsails.

In the morning, as usual, Tom came to my cot,



and asked me how I was. I told him I was better and in less pain, and that the surgeon had promised to dress my wound after breakfast, for the bandages had not been removed since I had first come on. 'And the privateer, Tom, I hope we shall take her; it will be some comfort to me that she is captured.'

'I think we shall, if the masts stand, Jacob; but we have an enormous press of sail, as you may guess by the way the frigate jumps; there is no standing on the forecastle, and there is a regular waterfall down in the waist from forward. We are nearing her now. It is beautiful to see how she behaves: when she heels over, we can perceive that all her men are lashed on deck, and she takes whole seas into her fore and aft mainsail, and pours them out again as she rises from the lurch. She deserves to escape, at all events.'

She did not, however, obtain her deserts, for about twelve o'clock in the day we were within a mile of her. At two, the marines were firing small arms at her, for we would not yaw to fire a gun, although she was right under our bows. When within a cable's length we shortened sail, so as to keep at that distance astern, and the chase, having lost several men by musketry, her captain waved his hat in token of surrender.

We immediately shortened sail, pelting her until every sail was lowered down: we then rounded to, keeping her under our lee, and firing at every man who made his appearance on deck. Taking possession of her was a difficult task: a boat could hardly live in such a sea, and when the captain called aloud for

volunteers, and I heard Tom's voice in the cutter as it was lowering down, my heart misgave me lest he should meet with some accident. At last I knew, from the conversation on deck, that the cutter had got safe on board, and my mind was relieved. The surgeon came up and dressed my arm, and I then received bodily as well as mental relief.

It was not until the next day, when we lay to, with the schooner close to us, that the weather became sufficiently moderate to enable us to receive the prisoners and put our own men and officers on board. The prize proved to be an American-built schooner, fitted out as a French privateer. She was called the *Cerf Agile*, mounting fourteen guns, of nearly three hundred tons measurement, and with a crew of one hundred and seventy men, of whom forty-eight were away in prizes. It was, perhaps, fortunate that the boats were not able to attack her, as they would have received a very warm reception. Thus did we succeed in capturing this mischievous vessel, after a chase of two hundred and seventy miles.

From 'Jacob Faithful,' by CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

30. DEATH OF LITTLE NELL

She was dead. No sleep so beautiful and calm, so free from trace of pain, so fair to look upon. She seemed a creature fresh from the hand of God, and waiting for the breath of life; not one who had lived and suffered death. Her couch was dressed with here and there some winter berries and green leaves, gathered in a spot she had been used to favour. 'When I die, put near me something that has loved the light, and had the sky above it always.' These were her words.

She was dead. Dear, gentle, patient, noble Nell, was dead. Her little bird—a poor, slight thing the pressure of a finger would have crushed—was stirring nimbly in its cage; and the strong heart of its child-mistress was mute and motionless for ever. Where were the traces of her early cares, her sufferings, and fatigues? All gone. Sorrow was dead indeed in her, but peace and perfect happiness were born; imaged in her tranquil beauty and profound repose.

And still her former self lay there, unaltered in this change. Yes. The old fireside had smiled upon that same sweet face; it had passed, like a dream, through haunts of misery and care; at the door of the poor schoolmaster on the summer evening, before the furnace-fire upon the cold, wet night, at the still bedside of the dying boy, there had been the same mild and lovely look. So shall we know the angels in their majesty, after death,

The old man held one languid arm in his, and had the small hand tight folded to his breast, for warmth. It was the hand she had stretched out to him with her last smile—the hand that had led him on, through all their wanderings. Ever and anon he pressed it to his lips; then hugged it to his breast again, murmuring that it was warmer now; and, as he said it, he looked in agony to those who stood around, as if imploring them to help her.

She was dead, and past all help, or need of help. The ancient rooms she had seemed to fill with life, even while her own was waning fast—the garden she had tended—the eyes she had gladdened—the noiseless haunts of many a thoughtful hour—the paths she had trodden, as it were but yesterday—could know her never more.

‘It is not,’ said the schoolmaster, as he bent down to kiss her on the cheek, and gave his tears free vent, ‘it is not on earth that Heaven’s justice ends. Think what earth is, compared with the world to which her young spirit has winged its early flight; and say, if one deliberate wish expressed in solemn tones above this bed could call her back to life, which of us would utter it!’

When morning came, and they could speak more calmly on the subject of their grief, they heard how her life had closed.

She had been dead two days. They were all about her at the time, knowing that the end was drawing on. She died soon after daybreak. They had read and talked to her in the earlier portion

of the night, but as the hours crept on she sank to sleep. They could tell, by what she faintly uttered in her dreams, that they were of her journeyings with the old man; they were of no painful scenes, but of people who had helped and used them kindly, for she often said 'God bless you!' with great fervour. Waking, she never wandered in her mind but once, and that was of beautiful music, which she said was in the air. God knows. It may have been.

Opening her eyes at last, from a very quiet sleep, she begged that they would kiss her once again. That done, she turned to the old man with a lovely smile upon her face—such, they said, as they had never seen, and never could forget—and clung with both her arms about his neck. They did not know that she was dead, at first.

She had never murmured or complained; but, with a quiet mind, and manner quite unaltered—save that she every day became more earnest and more grateful to them—faded like the light upon a summer's evening. The child who had been her little friend came there, almost as soon as it was day, with an offering of dried flowers, which he asked them to lay upon her breast. He begged hard to see her, saying that he would be very quiet, and that they need not fear his being alarmed, for he had sat alone by his young brother all day long when *he* was dead, and had felt glad to be so near him. They let him have his wish; and indeed he kept his word, and was, in his childish way, a lesson to them all.

Up to that time, the old man had not spoken once—except to her—or stirred from the bedside. But when he saw her little favourite, he was moved as they had not seen him yet, and made as though he would have him come nearer. Then, pointing to the bed, he burst into tears for the first time, and they who stood by, knowing that the sight of this child had done him good, left them alone together.

Soothing him with his artless talk of her, the child persuaded him to take some rest, to walk abroad, to do almost as he desired him. And when the day came on, which must remove her in her earthly shape from earthly eyes for ever, he led him away, that he might not know when she was taken from him. They were to gather fresh leaves and berries for her bed.

And now the bell—the bell she had so often heard, by night and day, and listened to with solemn pleasure almost as a living voice—rung its remorseless toll for her, so young, so beautiful, so good. Decrepit age, and vigorous life, and blooming youth, and helpless infancy, poured forth—on crutches, in the pride of health and strength, in the full blush of promise, in the mere dawn of life—to gather round her tomb. Old men were there, whose eyes were dim and senses failing; grandmothers, who might have died ten years ago, and still been old; the deaf, the blind, the lame, the palsied—the living dead in many shapes and forms—to see the closing of that early grave.

Along the crowded path they bore her now, pure

as the newly-fallen snow that covered it—whose day on earth had been as fleeting. Under the porch, where she had sat when heaven in its mercy brought her to that peaceful spot, she passed again; and the old church received her in its quiet shade.

They carried her to one old nook, where she had many and many a time sat musing, and laid their burden softly on the pavement. The light streamed on it through the coloured window—a window, where the boughs of trees were ever rustling in the summer, and where the birds sang sweetly all day long. With every breath of air that stirred among those branches in the sunshine, some trembling, changing light would fall upon her grave.

Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust! Many a young hand dropped in its little wreath, many a stifled sob was heard. Some—and they were not a few—knelt down. All were sincere and truthful in their sorrow.

The service done, the mourners stood apart, and the villagers closed round to look into the grave before the pavement-stone should be replaced. One called to mind how he had seen her sitting on that very spot, and how her book had fallen on her lap, and she was gazing, with a pensive face, upon the sky. Another told how he had wondered much that one so delicate as she should be so bold; how she had never feared to enter the church alone at night, but had loved to linger there when all was quiet, and even to climb the tower stair, with no more light than that of the moon-rays stealing through the loop-holes in the thick old wall. A

whisper went about among the oldest, that she had seen and talked with angels; and when they called to mind how she had looked, and spoken, and her early death, some thought it might be so, indeed. Thus coming to the grave in little knots, and glancing down, and giving place to others, and falling off in whispering groups of three or four, the church was cleared in time, of all but the sexton and the mourning friends.

They saw the vault covered, and the stone fixed down. Then, when the dusk of evening had come on, and not a sound disturbed the sacred stillness of the place, when the bright moon poured in her light on tomb and monument, on pillar, wall, and arch, and most of all, it seemed to them, upon her quiet grave—in that calm time, when worldly hopes and fears are humbled in the dust before them—then, with tranquil and submissive hearts, they turned away, and left the child with God.

From 'The Old Curiosity Shop,' by CHARLES DICKENS.

31. EDINBURGH AFTER FLODDEN

W. E. Aytoun, a Scottish poet, was born in 1813. His most popular work is the *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*. Among others may be mentioned the *Bon Gaultier Ballads* and *Bothwell*. He also translated the *Poems and Ballads of Goethe* from the German in conjunction with Theodore Martin. He died in 1865.

News of battle!—news of battle!—

Hark! 'tis ringing down the street:

And the archways and the pavement

4 Bear the clang of hurrying feet.

- News of battle? Who hath brought it?
News of triumph? Who should bring
Tidings from our noble army,
8 Greetings from our gallant King?
All last night we watched the beacons
Blazing on the hills afar,
Each one bearing, as it kindled,
12 Message of the opened war.
All night long the northern streamers
Shot across the trembling sky:
Fearful lights, that never beacon
16 Save when kings or heroes die.

- News of battle! Who hath brought it?
All are thronging to the gate;
'Warder—warder! open quickly!
20 Man—is this a time to wait?'
And the heavy gates are opened:
Then a murmur long and loud,
And a cry of fear and wonder
24 Bursts from out the bending crowd.
For they see in battered harness
Only one hard-stricken man;
And his weary steed is wounded,
28 And his cheek is pale and wan.
Spearless hangs a bloody banner
In his weak and drooping hand—
What! can this be Randolph Murray,
32 Captain of the city band?

Round him crush the people, crying,
'Tell us all—oh, tell us true!

- Where are they who went to battle,
36 Randolph Murray, sworn to you?
Where are they, our brothers—children?
Have they met the English foe?
Why art thou alone, unfollowed?
40 Is it weal, or is it woe?’
Like a corpse the grisly warrior
Looks from out his helm of steel;
But no word he speaks in answer,—
44 Only with his armèd heel
Chides his weary steed, and onward
Up the city streets they ride;
Fathers, sisters, mothers, children,
48 Shrieking, praying by his side.
‘By the God that made thee, Randolph!
Tell us what mischance hath come.’
Then he lifts his riven banner,
52 And the asker’s voice is dumb.
-

- And up then rose the Provost—
A brave old man was he,
Of ancient name, and knightly fame,
56 And chivalrous degree.
He ruled our city like a Lord
Who brooked no equal here,
And ever for the townsmen’s rights
60 Stood up ’gainst prince and peer.
And he had seen the Scottish host
March from the Borough-muir,
With music-storm and clamorous shout,
64 And all the din that thunders out
When youth’s of victory sure.
-

Oh, woeful now was the old man's look,
And he spake right heavily:
68 'Now, Randolph, tell thy tidings,
However sharp they be!
Woe is written on thy visage,
Death is looking from thy face:
72 Speak, though it be of overthrow—
It cannot be disgrace!'

Right bitter was the agony
That wrung that soldier proud:
76 Thrice did he strive to answer,
And thrice he groaned aloud.
Then he gave the riven banner
To the old man's shaking hand,
80 Saying: 'That is all I bring ye
From the bravest of the land!
Ay! ye well may look upon it—
It was guarded well and long,
84 By your brothers and your children,
By the valiant and the strong.
One by one they fell around it,
As the archers laid them low,
88 Grimly dying, still unconquered,
With their faces to the foe.

'Ay! ye well may look upon it—
There is more than honour there,
92 Else, be sure, I had not brought it
From the field of dark despair.
Never yet was royal banner
Steeped in such a costly dye;

96 It hath lain upon a bosom
Where no other shroud shall lie.
Sirs! I charge you, keep it holy;
Keep it as a sacred thing,
100 For the stain ye see upon it
Was the life blood of your King!’

Woe, woe and lamentation!
What a piteous cry was there!
104 Widows, maidens, mothers, children,
Shrieking, sobbing in despair!

O the blackest day for Scotland
That she ever knew before!
108 O our King—the good, the noble,
Shall we see him never more?
Woe to us and woe to Scotland!
O our sons, our sons and men!
112 Surely some have ’scaped the Southron,
Surely some will come again!
Till the oak that fell last winter
Shall uprear its shattered stem—
116 Wives and mothers of Dunedin—
Ye may look in vain for them!

W. E. AYTOUN.

32. THE DEATH OF COLONEL NEWCOME

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863) was born at Calcutta, but when six years old was sent to England for his education. He wrote several books, and contributed to *Punch* before the publication of his famous book *Vanity Fair* in 1847. *Pendennis* came next, and *Esmond* in 1852. Others of his best known works are *The Rose and the Ring*, *The Newcomes*, and *The Virginians*. Though his books were not so widely read as were Charles Dickens', yet Thackeray's work is esteemed by most people as highly as that of his great contemporary.

But our colonel, we all were obliged to acknowledge, was no more our friend of old days. He knew us again, and was good to every one round him, as his wont was; especially when 'Boy' came, his old eyes lighted up with simple happiness, and with eager, trembling hands he would seek under his bed-clothes, or in the pockets of his dressing-gown, for toys or cakes, which he had caused to be purchased for his grandson.

There was a little, laughing, red-cheeked, white-headed gown-boy of the school to whom the old man had taken a great fancy. One of the symptoms of his returning consciousness—and recovery, as we hoped—was his calling for this child, who pleased our friend by his archness and merry ways, and who, to the old gentleman's unfailing delight, used to call him 'Codd Colonel.'

'Tell little F—— that Codd Colonel wants to see him;' and the little gown-boy was brought to him; and the colonel would listen to him for hours, and hear all about his lessons and his play; and prattle, almost as childishly, about Dr. Raine and his own early school-days.

The boys of the school, it must be said, had heard the noble old gentleman's touching history, and had all got to know and love him. They came every day to hear news of him, sent him in books and papers to amuse him, and some benevolent young souls—God's blessing on all honest boys, say I!—painted theatrical characters and sent them in to Codd Colonel's grandson.

The little fellow was made free of gown-boys, and once came thence to his grandfather in a little gown, which delighted the old man hugely. Boy said he would like to be a little gown-boy; and I make no doubt, when he is old enough, his father will get him that post and put him under the tuition of my friend Dr. Senior.

So weeks passed away, during which our dear old friend still remained with us. His mind was gone at intervals, but would rally feebly.—The days went on, and our hopes, raised sometimes, began to flicker and fail. One evening the colonel left his chair for his bed in pretty good spirits, but passed a disturbed night, and the next morning was too weak to rise. Then he remained in his bed, and his friends visited him there.

One afternoon he asked for his little gown-boy; and the child was brought to him, and sat by the bed with a very awe-stricken face, and then gathered courage, and tried to amuse him by telling him how it was a half-holiday, and they were having a cricket-match with the St. Peter's boys on the green, and Grey Friars was in and winning.

The colonel quite understood about it. He would

like to see the game: he had played many a game on the green when he was a boy. He grew excited. Clive dismissed his father's little friend and put a sovereign into his hand, and away he ran to say that Codd Colonel had come into a fortune, and to buy tarts, and to see the match out. Yes, run, little white-haired gown-boy! Heaven speed you, little friend!

After the child had gone, Thomas Newcome began to wander more and more. He talked louder; he gave the word of command in Hindustanee as if to his men. Then he spoke words in French rapidly, seizing a hand that was near him, and crying, 'Toujours! toujours!' But it was Ethel's hand which he took. Ethel and Clive and the nurse were in the room with him. The nurse came to us, who were sitting in the adjoining apartment; Madame de Florac was there, with my wife and Bayham.

At the look in the woman's countenance Madame de Florac started up. 'He is very bad: he wanders a great deal,' the nurse whispered. The French lady fell instantly on her knees, and remained rigid in prayer. Some time afterwards Ethel came in with a scared face to our pale group. 'He is calling for you again, dear lady,' she said, going up to Madame de Florac, who was still kneeling; 'and just now he said he wanted Pendennis to take care of his boy. He will not know you.' She hid her tears as she spoke.

She went into the room, where Clive was at the bed's foot. The old man within it talked on rapidly

for a while; then again he would sigh and be still. Once more I heard him say hurriedly, 'Take care of him when I'm in India;' and then, with a heart-rending voice, he called out, 'Léonore! Léonore!' She was kneeling by his side now. The patient's voice sank into faint murmurs; only a moan now and then announced that he was not asleep.

At the usual evening hour the chapel-bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome's hands, outside the bed, feebly beat time. And just as the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face; and he lifted up his head a little and quickly said, 'Adsum!' and fell back. It was the word we used at school when names were called; and, lo! he whose heart was as that of a little child had answered to his name and stood in the presence of his Master.

From 'The Newcomes,' by WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

33. ONE WAY OF TAMING A BULL

Captain Mayne Reid (1818-1883) was born in Ireland, and emigrated to America in 1840. He first took to journalism at Philadelphia, and afterwards was appointed to the staff of the *New York Herald*. He served as a volunteer in the Mexican War from 1846-1848, but returned to Europe soon after, where he died at Ross, in Herefordshire. Among his best known books may be mentioned *The Rifle Rangers*, *The Scalp Hunters*, *The White Chief*, *The Young Yâgers*, and *The Headless Horseman*, but these are only a few titles selected from a very large number of this author's popular books.

Pushing through the jungle, we ascended the eminence. A brilliant picture opened before us. The storm had suddenly lulled, and the tropical sun

shone down upon the flowery surface of the earth, bathing its verdure in a flood of yellow light.

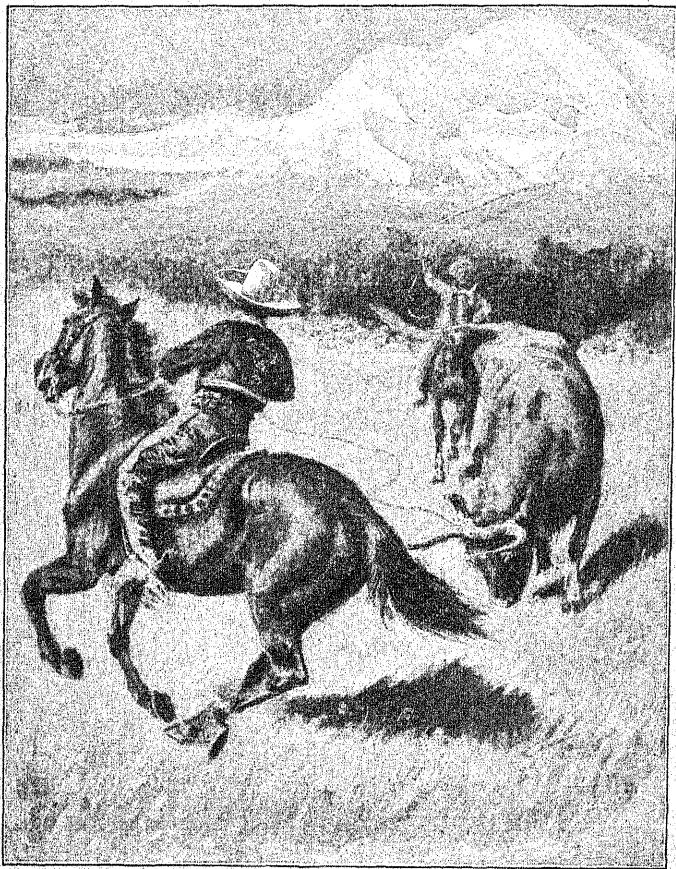
It was several hours before sunset, but the bright orb had commenced descending towards the snowy cone of Orizava, and his rays had assumed that golden red which characterises the ante-twilight of the tropics. The short-lived storm had swept the heavens, and the blue roof of the world was without a cloud. The dark masses had rolled away over the south-eastern horizon, and were now spending their fury upon the dyewood forests of Honduras and Tabasco.

At our feet lay the prairie, spread before us like a green carpet, and bounded upon the farther side by a dark wall of forest-trees. Several clumps of timber grew like islands on the plain, adding to the picturesque character of the landscape.

Near the centre of the prairie stood a small rancho, surrounded by a high picket fence. This we at once recognised as the 'corral' mentioned by Don Cosmé.

At some distance from the enclosure thousands of cattle were browsing upon the grassy level, their spotted flanks and long upright horns showing their descent from the famous race of Spanish bulls. Some of them, straggling from the herd, rambled through the 'mottes,' or lay stretched out under the shade of some isolated palm-tree. Ox-bells were tinkling their cheerful but monotonous music. Hundreds of horses and mules mingled with the herd; and we could distinguish a couple of leather-clad vaqueros galloping from point to point on their swift mustangs.

These, as we appeared upon the ridge, dashed out after a wild bull that had just escaped from the corral.



All five—the vaqueros, the mustangs, and the bull—swept over the prairie like wind, the bull

bellowing with rage and terror; while the vaqueros were yelling in his rear, and whirling their long lassoes. Their straight black hair floating in the wind—their swarthy, Arab-like faces—their high Spanish hats—their huge jingling spurs, and the ornamental trappings of their deep saddles—all these, combined with the perfect *manège* of their dashing steeds, and the wild excitement of the chase in which they were engaged, rendered them objects of picturesque interest; and we halted a moment to witness the result.

The bull came rushing past within fifty paces of where we stood, snorting with rage, and tossing his horns high in the air—his pursuers close upon him. At this moment one of the vaqueros launched his lasso, which, floating gracefully out, settled down over one horn. Seeing this, the vaquero did not turn his horse, but sat facing the bull, and permitted the rope to run out. It was soon carried taut; and, scarcely checking the animal, it slipped along the smooth horn and spun out into the air. The cast was a failure.

The second vaquero now flung his lasso with more success. The heavy loop, skilfully projected, shot out like an arrow, and embraced *both* horns in its curving noose. With the quickness of thought the vaquero wheeled his horse, buried his spurs deep into his flanks, and, pressing his thighs to the saddle, galloped off in an opposite direction. The bull dashed on as before. In a moment the lariat was stretched. The sudden jerk caused the thong to vibrate like a bowstring, and the bull lay motionless on the grass. The shock almost dragged the mustang upon his flanks.

The bull lay for some time where he had fallen; then, making an effort, he sprang up, and looked around him with a bewildered air. He was not yet conquered. His eye, flashing with rage, rolled around until it fell upon the rope leading from his horns to the saddle; and, suddenly lowering his head, with a furious roar he rushed upon the vaquero.

The latter, who had been expecting this attack, drove the spurs into his mustang, and started in full gallop across the prairie. On followed the bull, sometimes shortening the distance between him and his enemy, while at intervals the lasso, tightening, would almost jerk him upon his head.

After running for a hundred yards or so, the vaquero suddenly wheeled and galloped out at right angles to his former course. Before the bull could turn himself the rope again tightened with a jerk and flung him upon his side. This time he lay but an instant, and, again springing to his feet, he dashed off in fresh pursuit.

The second vaquero now came up, and, as the bull rushed past, launched his lasso after, and snared him around one of the legs, drawing the noose upon his ankle.

This time the bull was flung completely over, and with such a violent shock that he lay as if dead. One of the vaqueros then rode cautiously up, and, bending over in the saddle, unfastened both of the lariats, and set the animal free.

The bull rose to his feet, and, looking around in the most cowed and pitiful manner, walked quietly off, driven unresistingly towards the corral.

From 'The Rifle Rangers,' by CAPTAIN MAYNE REID.

34. THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW

[The defence of Lucknow was one of the most heroic defences during the Indian Mutiny.]

I

Banner of England, not for a season, O banner of
Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the
battle-cry!
Never with mightier glory than when we had
rear'd thee on high
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly siege of
Lucknow—
5 Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but ever we
raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of
England blew.

II

Frail were the works that defended the hold that
we held with our lives—
Women and children among us, God help them,
our children and wives!
Hold it we might—and for fifteen days or for
twenty at most.
10 'Never surrender, I charge you, but every man
die at his post!'
Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence
the best of the brave:
Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him—we
laid him that night in his grave.

- 'Every man die at his post!' and there hail'd
on our houses and halls
Death from their rifle-bullets, and death from
their cannon-balls,
- 15 Death in our innermost chamber, and death at
our slight barricade,
Death while we stood with the musket, and
death while we stooped to the spade,
Death to the dying, and wounds to the wounded,
for often there fell,
Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro' it, their
shot and their shell,
Death—for their spies were among us, their
marksmen were told of our best,
- 20 So that the brute bullet broke thro' the brain
that could think for the rest;
Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and bullets
would rain at our feet—
Fire from ten thousand at once of the rebels that
girdled us round—
Death at the glimpse of a finger from over the
breadth of a street,
Death from the heights of the mosque and the
palace, and death in the ground!
- 25 Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine! down, down!
and creep thro' the hole!
Keep the revolver in hand! you can hear him—
the murderous mole!
Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of the pick-
axe be thro'!
Click with the pick, coming nearer and nearer
again than before—

Now let it speak, and you fire, and the dark
pioneer is no more;
30 And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of
England blew!

III

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many times,
and it chanced on a day
Soon as the blast of that underground thunder-
clap echo'd away,
Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like so
many fiends in their hell—
Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on volley, and
yell upon yell—
35 Fiercely on all the defences our myriad enemy
fell.
What have they done? where is it? Out yonder.
Guard the Redan!
Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the Bailey-
gate! storm, and it ran
Surging and swaying all round us, as ocean on
every side
Plunges and heaves at a bank that is daily
drown'd by the tide—
40 So many thousands that if they be bold enough,
who shall escape?
Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall know we
are soldiers and men!
Ready! take aim at their leaders—their masses
are gapp'd with our grape—
Backward they reel like the wave, like the wave
flinging forward again,



Flying and foil'd at the last by the handful
they could not subdue;
45 And ever upon the topmost roof our banner
of England blew.

IV

Handful of men as we were, we were English in
heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to com-
mand, to obey, to endure,
Each of us fought as if hope for the garrison
hung but on him;
Still—could we watch at all points? we were
every day fewer and fewer.
50 There was a whisper among us, but only a
whisper that past:
'Children and wives—if the tigers leap into the
fold unawares—
'Every man die at his post—and the foe may
outlive us at last—
'Better to fall by the hands that they love, than
to fall into theirs!'
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by
the enemy sprung
55 Clove into perilous chasms our walls and our
poor palisades.
Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure that
your hand be as true!
Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed are
your flank fusillades—
Twice do we hurl them to earth from the
ladders to which they had clung,

Twice from the ditch where they shelter we
drive them with hand-grenades;
60 And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of
England blew.

V

Then on another wild morning another wild
earthquake out-tore
Clean from our lines of defence ten or twelve
good paces or more.
Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there from
the light of the sun—
One has leapt up on the breach, crying out:
'Follow me, follow me!'—
65 Mark him—he falls! then another, and *him* too,
and down goes he.
Had they been bold enough then, who can tell
but the traitors had won!
Boardings and rafters and doors—an embrasure!
make way for the gun!
Now double-charge it with grape! It is charged
and we fire, and they run.
Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the dark
face have his due!
70 Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought with
us, faithful and few,
Fought with the bravest among us, and drove
them, and smote them, and slew,
That ever upon the topmost roof our banner in
India blew.

VI

- Men will forget what we suffer and not what we
do. We can fight!
But to be soldier all day and be sentinel all
thro' the night—
- 75 Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their lying
alarms,
Bugles and drums in the darkness, and shoutings
and soundings to arms,
Ever the labour of fifty that had to be done by
five,
Ever the marvel among us that one should be
left alive,
Ever the day with its traitorous death from the
loopholes around,
- 80 Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to be
laid in the ground,
Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge
of cataract skies,
Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite torment
of flies,
Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over
an English field,
Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that *would*
not be heal'd,
- 85 Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-pitiless
knife,—
Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never could
save us a life.
Valour of delicate women who tended the hospital
bed,

Horror of women in travail among the dying and
dead,
Grief for our perishing children, and never a
moment for grief,
90 Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering hopes of
relief,
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd for all
that we knew—
Then day and night, day and night, coming down
on the still-shatter'd walls
Millions of musket - bullets, and thousands of
cannon-balls—
But ever upon the topmost roof our banner of
England blew.

VII

95 Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what was
told by the scout,
Outram and Havelock breaking their way through
the fell mutineers?
Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing again in
our ears!
All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubilant
shout,
Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer with con-
quering cheers,
100 Sick from the hospital echo them, women and
children come out,
Blessing the wholesome white faces of Have-
lock's good fusileers,
Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the High-
lander wet with their tears!

Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are saved!—
is it you? is it you?

Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved by the
blessing of Heaven!

105 'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have held it for
eighty-seven!

And ever aloft on the palace roof the old
banner of England' blew.

LORD TENNYSON.

35. A STORM IN THE PACIFIC

PART I

On the morning of the seventeenth day I came on deck, to find the schooner under double reefs, and flying rather wild before a heavy run of sea. Snoring trades and humming sails had been our portion hitherto. We were already nearing the island. My restrained excitement had begun again to overmaster me; and for some time my only book had been the patent log that trailed over the taffrail, and my chief interest the daily observation and our caterpillar progress across the chart.

My first glance, which was at the compass, and my second, which was at the log, were all that I could wish. We lay our course; we had been doing over eight since nine the night before, and I drew a heavy breath of satisfaction. And then I know not what odd and wintry appearance of the sea and sky knocked suddenly at my heart. I observed the schooner to look more than usually small, the men silent and studious of the weather. Nares, in one

of his rusty humours, afforded me no shadow of a morning salutation. He, too, seemed to observe the behaviour of the ship with an intent and anxious scrutiny.

What I liked still less, Johnson himself was at the wheel, which he spun busily, often with a visible effort; and as the seas ranged up behind us, he kept casting behind him eyes of animal swiftness, and drawing in his neck between his shoulders, like a man dodging a blow. From these signs, I gathered that all was not exactly for the best; and I would have given a good handful of dollars for a plain answer to the questions which I dared not put. Had I dared, with the present danger signal in the captain's face, I should only have been reminded of my position as supercargo—an office never touched upon in kindness—and advised to go below.

There was nothing for it, therefore, but to entertain my vague apprehensions as best I should be able, until it pleased the captain to enlighten me of his own accord. This he did sooner than I had expected—as soon, indeed, as the Chinaman had summoned us to breakfast, and we sat face to face across the narrow board

‘See here, Mr. Dodd,’ he began, looking at me rather queerly, ‘here is a business point arisen. This sea’s been running up for the last two days, and now it’s too high for comfort. The glass is falling, the wind is breezing up, and I won’t say but what there’s dirt in it. If I lay her to, we may have to ride out a gale of wind, and drift no one

knows where—on these French Frigate Shoals, for instance. If I keep her as she goes, we'll make that island to-morrow afternoon, and have the lee of it to lie under, if we can't make out to run in. The point you have to figure on, is whether you'll take the big chances of that Captain Trent making the place before you, or take the risk of something happening. I'm to run this ship to your satisfaction,' he added, with an ugly sneer. 'Well, here's a point for the supercargo.'

'Captain,' I returned, with my heart in my mouth, 'risk is better than certain failure.'

'Life is all risk, Mr. Dodd,' he remarked. 'But there's one thing: it's now or never; in half-an-hour no one could lay her to.'

'All right,' said I; 'let's run.'

'Run goes,' said he; and with that he fell to breakfast, and passed half-an-hour in stowing away pie, and devoutly wishing himself back in San Francisco.

When we came on deck again, he took the wheel from Johnson—it appears they could trust none among the hands—and I stood close beside him, feeling safe in this proximity, and tasting a fearful joy from our surroundings and the consciousness of my decision. The breeze had already risen, and as it tore over our heads, it uttered at times a long hooting note that sent my heart into my boots. The sea pursued us without remission, leaping to the assault of the low rail. The quarter-deck was all awash, and we must close the companion doors.

‘And all this, if you please, for Mr. Pinkerton’s dollars!’ the captain suddenly exclaimed. ‘There’s many a fine fellow gone under, Mr. Dodd, because of drivers like your friend. What do they care for a ship or two? Insured, I guess. What do they care for sailors’ lives alongside of a few thousand dollars? What they want is speed between ports, and a fool of a captain that’ll drive a ship under as I’m doing this one. You can put in the morning, asking why I do it.’

Before eleven a third reef was taken in the mainsail, and Johnson filled the cabin with a storm-sail of fine duck, and sat cross-legged on the streaming floor, vigorously putting it to rights with a couple of the hands. By dinner I had fled the deck, and sat in the bench corner, giddy, dumb, and stupefied with terror.

The frightened leaps of the poor *Norah Creina*, spanking like a stag for bare existence, bruised me between the table and the berths.

Overhead the wild huntsman of the storm passed continuously in one blare of mingled noises; screaming wind, straining timber, lashing rope’s-end, pounding block and bursting sea contributed; and I could have thought there was at times another, a more piercing, a more human note, that dominated all, like the wailing of an angel; I could have thought I knew the angel’s name, and that his wings were black.

It seemed incredible that any creature of man’s art could long endure the barbarous mishandling of the seas, kicked as the schooner was from mountain-

side to mountain-side, beaten and blown upon and wrenched in every joint and sinew, like a child upon the rack. There was not a plank of her that did not cry aloud for mercy; and as she continued to hold together, I became conscious of a growing sympathy with her endeavours, a growing admiration for her gallant staunchness, that amused and at times obliterated my terrors for myself. God bless every man that swung a mallet on that tiny and strong hull! It was not for wages only that he laboured, but to save men's lives.

36. A STORM IN THE PACIFIC

PART II

All the rest of the day, and all the following night, I sat in the corner or lay wakeful in my bunk; and it was only with the return of morning that a new phase of my alarm drove me once more on deck.

A gloomier interval I never passed. Johnson and Nares steadily relieved each other at the wheel and came below. The first glance of each was at the glass, which he repeatedly knuckled and frowned upon; for it was sagging lower all the time.

Then, if Johnson were the visitor, he would pick a snack out of the cupboard, and stand, braced against the table, eating it, and perhaps obliging me with a word or two of his heehaw conversation: how it was 'a son of a gun of a cold night on deck, Mr. Dodd' (with a grin); how 'it wasn't no night for panjammers, he could

tell me': having transacted all which, he would throw himself down in his bunk and sleep his two hours with compunction. But the captain neither ate nor slept. 'You there, Mr. Dodd?' he would say, after a visit to the glass. 'Well, my son, we're one hundred and four miles' (or whatever it was) 'off the island, and scudding for all we're worth. We'll make it to-morrow about four, or not, as the case may be. That's the news. And now, Mr. Dodd, I've stretched a point for you; you can see I'm dead tired; so just you stretch away back to your bunk again.'

And with this attempt at geniality, his teeth would settle hard down on his cigar, and he would pass his spell below staring and blinking at the cabin lamp through a cloud of tobacco smoke.

He has told me since that he was happy, which I should never have divined.

'You see,' he said, 'the wind we had was never anything out of the way; but the sea was really nasty, the schooner wanted a lot of humouring, and it was clear from the glass that we were close to some dirt. We might be running out of it, or we might be running right crack into it. Well, there's always something sublime about a big deal like that; and it kind of raises a man in his own liking. We're a queer kind of beasts, Mr. Dodd.'

The morning broke with sinister brightness; the air alarmingly transparent, the sky pure, the rim of the horizon clear and strong against the heavens. The wind and the wild seas, now vastly swollen, indefatigably hunted us.



I stood on deck, choking with fear; I seemed to lose all power upon my limbs; my knees were as paper when she plunged into the murderous valleys; my heart collapsed when some black mountain fell in avalanche beside her counter, and the water, that was more than spray, swept round my ankles like a torrent.

I was conscious of but one strong desire—to bear myself decently in my terrors, and whatever should happen to my life, preserve my character: as the captain said, we are a queer kind of beasts.

Breakfast-time came, and I made shift to swallow some hot tea. Then I must stagger below to take the time, reading the chronometer with dizzy eyes, and marvelling the while what value there could be in observations taken in a ship launched (as ours then was) like a missile among flying seas.

The forenoon dragged on in a grinding monotony of peril; every spoke of the wheel a rash but an obliged experiment—rash as a forlorn hope, needful as the leap that lands a fireman from a burning staircase.

Noon was made; the captain dined on his day's work, and I on watching him; and our place was entered on the chart with a precision which seemed to me half pitiful and half absurd, since the next eye to behold that sheet of paper might be the eye of an exploring fish.

One o'clock came, then two; the captain gloomed and chafed, as he held to the coaming of the house.

Of a sudden, he turned towards the mate, who was doing his trick at the wheel.

'Two points on the port bow,' I heard him say; and he took the wheel himself.

Johnson nodded, wiped his eyes with the back of his wet hand, watched a chance as the vessel lunged up hill, and got to the main rigging, where he swarmed aloft. Up and up I watched him go, hanging on at every ugly plunge, gaining with every lull of the schooner's movement, until, clambering into the cross-trees and clinging with one arm around the masts, I could see him take one comprehensive sweep of the south-westerly horizon.

The next moment he had slid down the backstay and stood on deck, with a grin, a nod, and a gesture of the finger that said 'yes'; the next again, and he was back sweating and squirming at the wheel, his tired face streaming and smiling, and his hair and the rags and corners of his clothes lashing round him in the wind.

Nares went below, fetched up his binocular, and fell into a silent perusal of the sea-line; I also, with my unaided eyesight. Little by little, in that white waste of water, I began to make out a quarter where the whiteness appeared more condensed: the sky above was whitish likewise, and misty like a squall; and little by little there thrilled upon my ears a note deeper and more terrible than the yelling of the gale—the long, thundering roll of breakers.

Nares wiped his night-glass on his sleeve and passed it to me, motioning, as he did so, with his hand. An endless wilderness of raging billows came and went and danced in the circle of the glass;

now and then a pale corner of sky, or the strong line of the horizon rugged with the heads of waves; and then of a sudden—come and gone ere I could fix it, with a swallow's swiftness—one glimpse of what we had come so far and paid so dear to see: the masts and rigging of a brig pencilled on heaven, with an ensign streaming at the main, and the ragged ribbons from a topsail thrashing from the yard.

Again and again, with toilful searching, I recalled that apparition. There was no sign of any land; the wreck stood between sea and sky, a thing the most isolated I had ever viewed; but as we drew nearer, I perceived her to be defended by a line of breakers which drew off on either hand, and marked, indeed, the nearest segment of the reef. Heavy spray hung over them like a smoke, some hundred feet into the air; and the sound of their consecutive explosions rolled like a cannonade.

In half-an-hour we were close in; for perhaps as long again we skirted that formidable barrier towards its farther side; and presently the sea began insensibly to moderate and the ship to go more sweetly. We had gained the lee of the island, as (for form's sake) I may call that ring of foam and haze and thunder; and shaking out a reef, wore ship and headed for the passage.

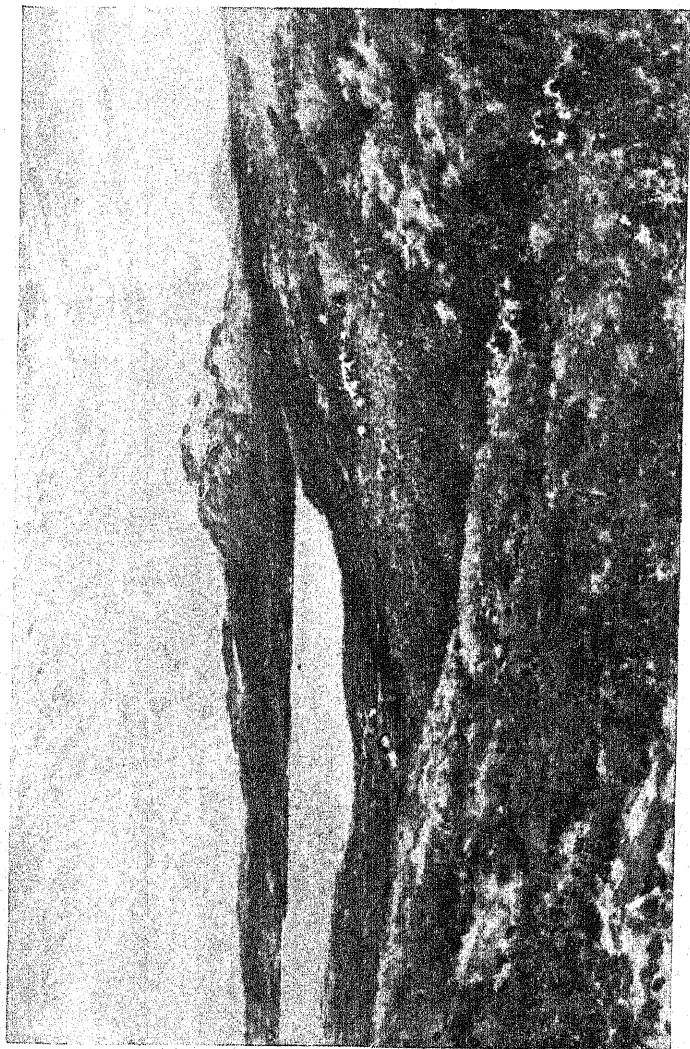
From 'The Wrecker,' by R. L. STEVENSON. By kind permission of Messrs. CASSELL & Co.

37. HEATH FROM THE HIGHLANDS

Henry Clarence Kendall, the Australian poet, was the grandson of one of the first white settlers in New Zealand. His best and last volume of poems, *Songs from the Mountains*, appeared in 1880. After a life of many hardships, the poet died in 1882.

1. Here, where the great hills fall away
 To bays of silver sea,
 I hold within my hand to-day
 A wild thing, strange to me.
2. Behind me is the deep green dell
 Where lives familiar light;
 The leaves and flowers I know so well
 Are gleaming in my sight.
3. And yonder is the mountain glen,
 Where sings in trees unstirred
 By breath of breeze or axe of men
 The shining satin-bird.
4. The old weird cry of plover comes
 Across the marshy ways,
 And here the hermit hornet hums,
 And here the wild bee strays.
5. No novel life or light I see,
 On hill, in dale beneath:
 All things around are known to me
 Except this bit of heath.
6. This touching growth hath made me dream—
 It sends my soul afar
 To where the Scottish mountains gleam
 Against the Northern star.

7. It droops—this plant—like one who grieves;
But, while my fancy glows,
There is that glory on its leaves
Which never robed the rose.
8. For near its wind-blown native spot
Were born, by crags uphurled,
The ringing songs of Walter Scott
That shook the whole wide world.
9. There, haply, by the sounding streams,
And where the fountains break,
He saw the darling of his dreams,
The Lady of the Lake.
10. And on the peaks where never leaf
Of lowland beauty grew,
Perhaps he met Clan Alpine's chief,
The rugged Roderick Dhu.
11. Not far, perchance, this heather throve
(Above fair banks of ferns),
From that green place of stream and grove
That knew the voice of Burns.
12. Against the radiant river ways
Still waves the noble wood,
Where in the old majestic days
The Scottish poet stood.
13. Perhaps my heather used to beam
In robes of morning frost,
By dells which saw that lovely dream—
The Mary that he lost.



From a Drawing by Tom Lloyd

HEATHER IN THE HIGHLANDS

14. I hope, indeed, the singer knew
The little spot of land
On which the mountain beauty grew
That withers in my hand.
15. So potent is this heather, here,
That under skies of blue,
I seem to breathe the atmosphere
That William Wallace knew.
16. And under windy mountain wall,
Where breaks the torrent loose,
I fancy I can hear the call
Of grand old Robert Bruce.

HENRY CLARENCE KENDALL. (*By permission.*)

38. SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA

PART I

On 11th January, Moore reached Corunna, and faced swiftly round to meet his pursuers. He was twelve hours in advance of Soult, and the French general lingered till the 16th before joining in the shock of battle—a delay which was, in part, necessary to allow his straggling rear-guard to close up; but in part, also, it was due to a doubt as to what might be the result of closing on a foe so hardy and stubborn. Moore employed this breathing time in preparing for embarkation. He blew up on the 13th two outlying powder magazines; in one were piled 4000 barrels of powder, and its explosion was like the crash of a volcano. The earth trembled for

miles, a tidal wave rolled across the harbour, a column of smoke and dust, with flames leaping from its black flanks, rose slowly into the sky, and then burst, pouring a roaring tempest of stones and earth over a vast area, and destroying many lives.

Moore next shot all his foundered horses, to the mingled grief and wrath of his cavalry. The 15th Hussars alone brought 400 horses into Spain, and took 31 back to England! The horses, it seems, were ruined, not for the want of shoes, but 'for want of hammers and nails to put them on.' Having embarked his dismounted cavalry, his stores, his wounded, his heavy artillery, and armed his men with new muskets, Moore quietly waited Soult's onfall. His force was only 14,000 strong, without cavalry, and with only nine six-pounders, and he could not occupy the true defence of Corunna, the great rocky range which runs at right angles to the Mero. He had to abandon this to the French, and content himself with holding an inferior ridge nearer to the town.

The onfall of the French was swift and vehement. The eleven great guns from the crags poured a tempest of shot on the British ridge, the skirmishers of Mermet's column ran forward, and drove back the British pickets with a heavy fire, while the solid column, coming on at the double after them, carried the village.

Moore, with his swift soldierly glance, instantly saw that this was the pivot of the battle, and he galloped to the spot. The 50th and the 62nd were stationed here, and Charles Napier, who as senior Major commanded the 50th, has left a most vivid

word-picture of Moore's bearing on the field of battle :

'I stood in front of my left wing on a knoll, from whence the greatest part of the field could be seen, and my pickets were fifty yards below disputing the ground with the French skirmishers, but a heavy French column, which had descended the mountain at a run, was coming on behind with great rapidity, and shouting—"Forward! kill! Forward! kill!" their cannon, at the same time, plunging from above, ploughed the ground and tore our ranks.

'Suddenly I heard the gallop of horses, and, turning, saw Moore. He came at speed, and pulled up so sharp and close, he seemed to have alighted from the air, man and horse looking at the approaching foe with an intentness that seemed to concentrate all feeling in their eyes.

'The sudden stop of the animal—a cream-coloured one, with black tail and mane—had cast the latter streaming forward, its ears were pushed out like horns, while its eyes flashed fire, and it snorted loudly with expanded nostrils.

'My first thought was, it will be away like the wind; but then I looked at the rider, and the horse was forgotten. Thrown on its haunches, the animal came sliding and dashing the dirt up with its forefeet, thus bending the General forward almost to its neck; but his head was thrown back, and his look more keenly piercing than I ever before saw it.

'He glanced to the right and left, and then fixed his eyes intently on the enemy's advancing column, at the same time grasping the reins with both his

hands and pressing the horse firmly with his knees; his body thus seemed to deal with the animal while his mind was intent on the enemy, and his aspect was one of searching intensesness beyond the power of words to describe. For a while he looked, and then galloped to the left without uttering a word.'

39. SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA

PART II

Moore's tactics were both daring and skilful. He swung round the 4th Regiment, so as to smite with a flank fire that section of the French column moving with unwise daring round his right. He ordered up Paget, and after him Fraser, so as to make a counterstroke at the French left; and meanwhile he launched the 42nd and 50th against the French column which had carried the village in the front. Napier, who commanded the 50th, has painted a most graphic picture of the struggle. 'Clunes,' he said to the captain of the Grenadier company, 'take your Grenadiers and open the ball!' 'He stalked forward alone, like Goliath before the Philistines, for six feet five he was in height, and of proportionate bulk and strength; and thus the battle began on our side.'

Napier sternly forbade any firing, and to prevent it and to occupy the men's attention, made them slope and carry arms by word of command. 'Many of them,' he says, 'cried out, "Major, let us fire!" "Not yet," was my answer.' The 42nd

had checked a short distance from a wall, but Napier led his men right up to the wall, and then said, 'Do you see your enemies plainly enough to hit them?' 'Many voices shouted, "We do." "Then blaze away," said I; and such a rolling fire broke out as I hardly ever heard since.' The wall was breast-high. Napier, followed by the officers, leaped over, and called on the men to follow. About a hundred did so at once, and, finding the others not quick enough for his impatience, Napier leaped back, and holding a halberd horizontally pushed the men quickly over. He then leaped over himself, and the instant he did so five French soldiers suddenly rose from the ground, levelled their muskets at him, and fired. The muskets were so near as to almost touch him, but his orderly sergeant, running at his side, struck them up with his pike, and saved Napier's life.

Meanwhile, at every point, the British were victorious. The Guards and the Black Watch carried the village; Baird and Hope drove back with confusion and loss the columns that assailed them; and Moore, eagerly watching the whole line of battle from the right of his position, was about to hurl Paget, supported by Fraser, on the French left.

At that moment Moore was struck on the left breast by a cannon ball, and dashed violently on the ground. It was a dreadful wound. The shoulder was smashed, the arm hung by a piece of skin, the ribs over the heart were stripped of flesh and broken, and the muscles that covered them hung in long rags. But Moore, absorbed in the great struggle



before him, sat up in an instant, his eyes still eagerly watching Paget's advance.

His staff gathered round him, and he was placed in a blanket, and some soldiers proceeded to carry him from the field. One of his staff, Hardinge, tried to unbuckle his sword, as the hilt was entangled in the strips of flesh hanging from his wound, but the dying soldier stopped him. 'I had rather,' he said, 'it should go out of the field with me!'

One of his officers, taking courage from Moore's unshaken countenance, expressed a hope of his recovery. Moore looked steadfastly at his own shattered breast for an instant, and calmly answered, 'No, I feel that to be impossible.' Again and again, as they carried the dying general from the field, he made his bearers halt, and turn round, that he might watch the fight. It was the scene of Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham repeated! And the spectacle was such as might well gladden the eyes of Moore. On the left, and at the centre, the British were everywhere advancing. Paget's column was overthrowing everything before it in the valley.

Soult had been roughly driven back; the transports were crowding into the harbour. It was enough to have ended a long retreat with the halo of victory, and to have secured an undisturbed embarkation.

Meanwhile Moore had been carried into his quarters at Corunna. A much-attached servant stood with tears running down his face as the dying man was carried into the house. 'My friend,' said

Moore, 'it is nothing!' Then turning to a member of his staff, Colonel Anderson, he said, 'Anderson, you know I have always wished to die in this way. I hope my country will do me justice.' Only once his lips quivered, and his voice shook, as he said, 'Say to my mother——' and then stopped, while he struggled to regain composure. 'Stanhope,' he said, as his eye fell on his aide-de-camp's face, 'remember me to your sister'—the famous Hester Stanhope, Pitt's niece, to whom Moore was engaged. Life was fast and visibly sinking, but he said, 'I feel myself so strong, I fear I shall be long dying.'

But he was not: death came swiftly and almost painlessly. Wrapped in a soldier's cloak, he was carried by the light of torches to a grave hastily dug in the citadel at Corunna; and far off to the south, as the sorrowing officers stood round the grave of their dead chief, could be heard from time to time the sound of Soult's guns, yet in sullen retreat. The scene is made immortal in Wolfe's noble lines:—

'Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow,
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his
head,
And we far away on the billow.'

From 'Fights for the Flag,' by the Rev. W. H. FITCHETT. By kind permission of the author and the publishers, Messrs. SMITH, ELDER & Co.

40. THE PLEASANT ISLE OF AVÈS

The Rev. Charles Kingsley was born at Holne Vicarage, on the borders of Dartmoor, in Devonshire, June 12, 1819. After leaving Cambridge he became curate of Eversley, a small village in Hampshire, and he was presented to the living when it became vacant. One of Kingsley's first books was *Alton Locke*, in which he tried to arouse sympathy for the wretched working tailors of London. From his endeavours to better the position of working men, and from his sympathy with the Chartist movement, he was often named "The Chartist Parson." He died in 1875. His best known works are *Alton Locke*, *Yeast*, *Westward Ho!* *Hereward the Wake*, *Glaucus*, *The Water Babies*, and a poem *The Saint's Tragedy*.

1. Oh England is a pleasant place for them that's
rich and high,
But England is a cruel place for such poor folks
as I;
And such a port for mariners I ne'er shall see
again
As the pleasant Isle of Avès, beside the Spanish
main.
2. There were forty craft in Avès that were both
swift and stout,
All furnished well with small arms and cannons
round about;
And a thousand men in Avès made laws so fair
and free
To choose their valiant captains and obey them
loyally.
3. Thence we sailed against the Spaniard with his
hoards of plate and gold,
Which he wrung with cruel tortures from Indian
folk of old;

Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as
hard as stone,
Who flog men, and keel-haul them, and starve
them to the bone.

4. O the palms grew high in Avès, and fruits that
shone like gold,
And the colibris and parrots they were gorgeous
to behold;
And the negro maids to Avès from bondage fast
did flee,
To welcome gallant sailors, a-sweeping in from
sea.
5. O sweet it was in Avès to hear the landward
breeze,
A-swing with good tobacco in a net between the
trees,
With a negro lass to fan you, while you listened
to the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside, that never
touched the shore.
6. But Scripture saith, an ending to all fine things
must be;
So the King's ships sailed on Avès, and quite put
down were we.
All day we fought like bulldogs, but they burst
the booms at night;
And I fled in a piragua, sore wounded, from the
fight.

7. Nine days I floated starving, and a negro lass
beside,
Till, for all I tried to cheer her, the poor young
thing she died;
But as I lay a-gasping, a Bristol sail came by,
And brought me home to England here, to beg
until I die.
8. And now I'm old and going—I'm sure I can't tell
where;
One comfort is, this world's so hard, I can't be
worse off there:
If I might but be a sea-dove, I'd fly across the
main,
To the pleasant Isle of Avès, to look at it once
again.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

41. HOW UMSLOPOGAAS HELD THE STAIR

PART I

As he spake, or rather chanted, his wild war-song, the armed men, among whom in the growing light I recognised both Nasta and Agon, streamed along the stair with a rush, and one big fellow, armed with a heavy spear, dashed up the ten semi-circular steps ahead of his comrades and struck at the great Zulu with a spear. Umslopogaas moved his body but not his legs, so that the blow missed him, and next instant Inkosi-kaas crashed through headpiece, hair and skull, and the man's

corpse was rattling down the steps. As he dropped, his round hippopotamus-hide shield fell from his hand on to the marble, and the Zulu stooped down and seized it, still chanting as he did so.

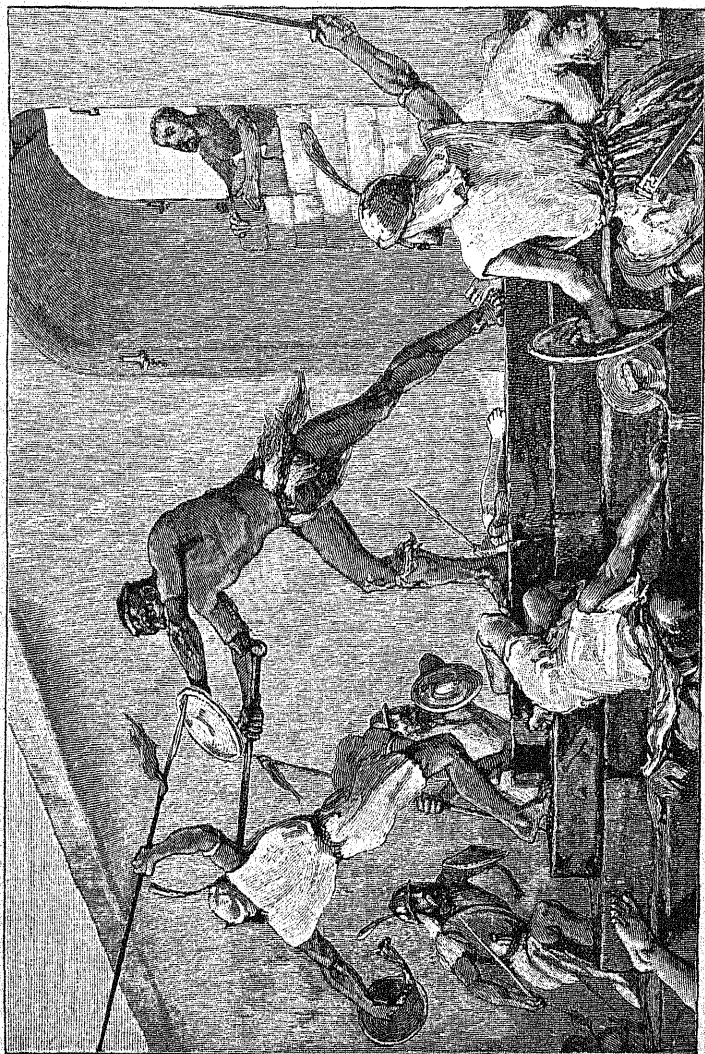
In another second the sturdy Kara had also slain a man, and then began a scene the like of which has not been known to me.

Up rushed the assailants, one, two, three at a time, and as fast as they came, the axe crashed and the sword swung, and down they rolled again, dead or dying. And ever as the fight thickened, the old Zulu's eye seemed to get quicker and his arm stronger. He shouted out his war-cries and the names of chiefs whom he had slain, and the blows of his awful axe rained straight and true, shearing through everything they fell on. There was none of the scientific method he was so fond of about this last immortal fight of his; he had no time for it, but struck with his full strength, and at every stroke a man sank in his tracks, and went rattling down the marble steps.

They hacked and hewed at him with swords and spears, wounding him in a dozen places till he streamed red with blood; but the shield protected his head and the chain-shirt his vitals, and for minute after minute, aided by the gallant Zu-Vendi, he still held the stair.

At last Kara's sword broke, and he grappled with a foe, and they rolled down together, and he was cut to pieces, dying like the brave man that he was.

Umslopogaas never blenched or turned. 'Galazi!



Oh that thou wert here, my brother Galazi!' he cried, and beat down a foe, ay, and another, and another, till at last they drew back from the slippery blood-stained steps, and stared at him in amazement, thinking that he was no mortal man.

The wall of marble block was four feet six high now, and hope rose in my heart as I leaned there against it a miserable helpless log, grinding my teeth, and watched that glorious struggle. I could do no more, for I had lost my revolver in the battle.

And old Umslopogaas, he leaned too on his good axe, and, faint as he was with wounds, he mocked them, he called them 'women'—the grand old warrior, standing there one against so many! And for a breathing space none would come against him, notwithstanding Nasta's exhortations, till at last old Agon, who, to do him justice, was a brave man, mad with baffled rage, and seeing that the wall would soon be built and his plans defeated, shook the great spear he held, and rushed up the dripping steps.

'Ah, ah!' shouted the Zulu, as he recognised the priest's flowing white beard, 'it is thou, old "witch-finder"! Come on! I await thee, white "medicine man"; come on! come on! I have sworn to slay thee, and I ever keep my faith.'

On came Agon, taking him at his word, and drove the big spear with such force at Umslopogaas that it sunk right through the tough shield and pierced him in the neck. The Zulu cast down the transfixed shield, and that moment was Agon's last,

for before he could free his spear and strike again, with a shout of '*There's for thee, Rainmaker!*' Umslopogaas gripped Inkosi-kaas with both hands and whirled her on high and drove her right on to his venerable head, so that Agon rolled down dead among the corpses of his fellow-murderers, and there was an end of him and his plots together. And even as he fell, a great cry rose from the foot of the stair, and looking out through the portion of the doorway that was yet unclosed, we saw armed men rushing up to the rescue, and called an answer to their shouts.

42. HOW UMSLOPOGAAS HELD THE STAIR

PART II

Then the would-be murderers who yet remained on the stairway, and amongst whom I saw several priests, turned to fly, but, having nowhere to go, were butchered as they fled. Only one man stayed, and he was the great lord Nasta, Nyleptha's suitor, and the father of the plot. For a moment the black-bearded Nasta stood with bowed face leaning on his long sword as though in despair, and then, with a dreadful shout, he too rushed up at the Zulu, and, swinging the glittering sword around his head, dealt him such a mighty blow beneath his guard, that the keen steel of the heavy blade bit right through the chain armour and deep into Umslopogaas' side, for a moment paralysing him and causing him to drop his axe.

Raising the sword again, Nasta sprang forward to make an end of him, but little he knew his foe. With a shake and a yell of fury, the Zulu gathered himself together and sprang straight at Nasta's throat, as I have sometimes seen a wounded lion spring. He struck him full as his foot was on the topmost stair, and his long arms closing round him like iron bands, down they rolled together struggling furiously. Nasta was a strong man and a desperate, but he could not match the strongest man in Zululand, sore wounded though he was, whose strength was as the strength of a bull. In a minute the end came. I saw old Umslopogaas stagger to his feet—ay, and saw him swing up the struggling Nasta by a single gigantic effort, and with a shout of triumph hurl him straight over the parapet of the bridge, to be crushed to powder on the rocks two hundred feet below.

Soon the wall was down again, and through the doorway, followed by a crowd of rescuers, staggered old Umslopogaas, an awful and, in a way, a glorious figure. The man was a mass of wounds, and a glance at his wild eye told me that he was dying. The 'keshla' gum-ring upon his head was severed in two places by sword-cuts, one just over the curious hole in his skull, and the blood poured down his face from the gashes. Also on the right side of his neck was a stab from a spear, inflicted by Agon; there was a deep cut on his left arm just below where the mail shirt-sleeve stopped, and on the right side of his body the armour was severed by a gash six inches long, where Nasta's

mighty sword had bitten through it and deep into its wearer's vitals.

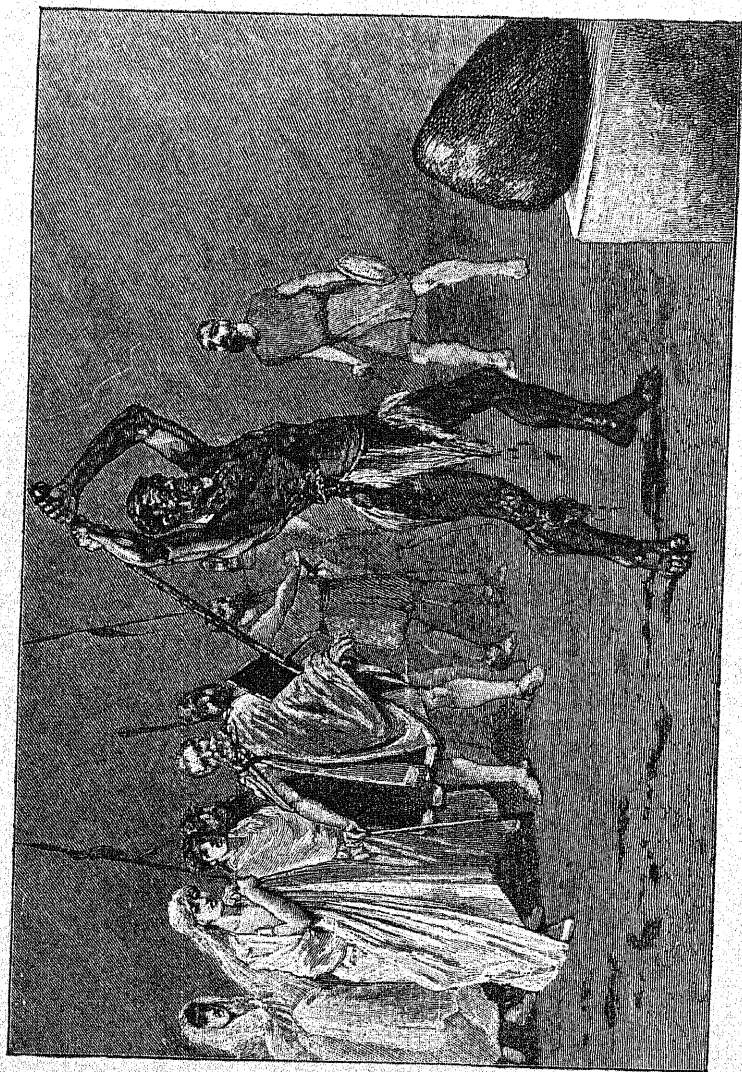
On, axe in hand, he staggered, that dreadful-looking, splendid savage, and the ladies forgot to turn faint at the scene of blood, and cheered him, as well they might, but he never stayed or heeded. With outstretched arms and tottering gait he pursued his way, followed by us all along the broad shell-strewn walk that ran through the courtyard, past the spot where the blocks of marble lay, through the round arched doorway and the thick curtains that hung within it, down the short passage and into the great hall, which was now filling with hastily-armed men, who poured through the side entrance. Straight up the hall he went, leaving behind him a track of blood on the marble pavement, till at last he reached the sacred stone, which stood in the centre of it, and here his strength seemed to fail him, for he stopped and leaned upon his axe. Then suddenly he lifted up his voice and cried aloud:

'I die, I die—but it was a kingly fray. Where are they who came up the great stair? I see them not. Art thou there, Macumazahn, or art thou gone before to wait for me in the dark whither I go? The blood blinds me—the place turns round—I hear the voice of waters; Galazi calls me!'¹

Next, as though a new thought had struck him, he lifted the red axe and kissed the blade.

¹ I do not know who Galazi was; Umslopogaas never spoke of him to me.—A. Q.

For the history of the life and death of Galazi see *Nada the Lily*.—ED.



'Farewell, Inkosi-kaas,' he cried. 'Nay, nay, we will go together; we cannot part, thou and I. We have lived too long one with another, thou and I. None other shall hold thee.

'One more stroke, only one! A good stroke! a straight stroke! a strong stroke!' and, drawing himself to his full height, with a wild heart-shaking shout, with both hands he began to whirl the axe round his head till it looked like a circle of flaming steel. Then, suddenly, with awful force he brought it down straight on to the crown of the mass of sacred stone. A shower of sparks flew up, and such was the almost superhuman strength of the blow, that the massive marble split with a rending sound into a score of pieces, whilst of Inkosi-kaas there remained but some fragments of steel and a fibrous rope of shattered horn that had been the handle. Down with a crash on to the pavement fell the fragments of the holy stone, and down with a crash on to them, still grasping the knob of Inkosi-kaas, fell the brave old Zulu—*dead*.

And thus the hero died.

From 'Allan Quatermain,' by H. RIDER HAGGARD.

43. THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

Rudyard Kipling, the poet and writer, was born in Bombay in 1865. In 1882 he became Assistant Editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette* and *Pioneer*, and in 1886 his first volume of poems was issued under the title of *Departmental Ditties*. Mr. Kipling has travelled in many lands, and his books are full of information and knowledge of men. His early books dealt with life in India, the most famous of them being *Soldiers Three*, and the *First and Second Jungle Books*. Others equally well known are *Kim*, *Captains Courageous* (dealing with the Newfoundland fisheries), *The Day's Work*, *The Light that Failed*, *The Phantom Rickshaw*, and *Barrack Room Ballads*, the latter containing *On the Road to Mandalay* and many of his finest poems.

[For many years past the turbulent tribesmen of the mountainous district to the north-west of India have given trouble to the British, and a number of little wars, some of them involving quite formidable expeditions, have been waged against them. Many of these frontier tribesmen, Pathans, as they are called, have taken service in the British Indian Army, and, when so enlisted, make excellent soldiers. The scene of the following poem is the country westward of Peshawur, within the entrance to the Khyber Pass. Kamal is a Pathan border chief.]

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the
Border-side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is
the Colonel's pride;
He has lifted her out of the stable door between
the dawn and the day,
4 And turned the calkins upon her feet, and
ridden her far away.
Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led
a troop of the Guides:
'Is there never a man of all my men can say
where Kamal hides?'
Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son
of the Ressaldar:
8 'If ye know the track of the morning mist, ye
know where his pickets are.

- At dusk he harries the Abazai, at dawn he is
into Bonair,
But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own
place to fare,
So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird
can fly,
12 By the favour of God ye may cut him off ere
he win to the Tongue of Jagai.
But if he be past the Tongue of Jagai, right
swiftly turn ye then,
For the length and the breadth of that grisly
plain is sown with Kamal's men.
There is rock to the left, and rock to the right,
and low lean thorn between,
16 And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick when never
a man is seen.'

- The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw,
rough dun was he;
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as
he can fly,
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut
of the Tongue of Jagai,
20 Till he was aware of his father's mare with
Kamal upon her back;
And when he could spy the white of her eye
he made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the
whistling ball went wide.
'Ye shoot like a soldier,' Kamal said. 'Show
now if ye can ride.'

- 24 It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown
dust-devils go—
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the
mare like a barren doe.
The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged
his head above,
But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars as
a lady plays with a glove.
- 28 There was rock to the left, and rock to the
right, and low lean thorn between,
And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho'
never a man was seen.
They have ridden the low moon out of the sky,
their hoofs drum up the dawn—
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the
mare like a new-roused fawn.
- 32 The dun he fell at a water-course—in a woful
heap fell he,
And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and
pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—
small room was there to strive;
'Twas only by favour of mine,' quoth he, 'ye
rode so long alive;
- 36 There was not a rock for twenty miles, there
was not a clump of tree,
But covered a man of my own men with his
rifle cocked on his knee.
If I had raised my bridle hand, as I have held
it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast were feasting
all in a row;

- 40 If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I
have held it high,
The kite that whistles above us now were gorged
till she could not fly.'

Lightly answered the Colonel's son: 'Do good
to bird and beast,

But count who come for the broken meats before
thou makest a feast.

- 44 If there should follow a thousand swords to
carry my bones away,

Belike the price of a jackal's meal were more
than a thief could pay.

They will feed their horse on the standing crop,
their men on the garnered grain,

The thatch of the byres will serve their fires
when all the cattle are slain.

- 48 But if thou thinkest the price be fair,—thy
brethren wait to sup,

The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—howl,
dog, and call them up!

And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer,
and gear, and stack,

Give me my father's mare again, and I'll fight
my own way back.'

- 52 Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set
him upon his feet.

'No talk shall be of dogs,' said he, 'when wolf
and grey wolf meet.



May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed
or breath.

What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest
at the dawn with Death?’

56 Lightly answered the Colonel’s son: ‘I hold by
the blood of my clan;

Take up the mare for my father’s gift—in truth,
she has carried a man.’

The red mare ran to the Colonel’s son and
nuzzled against his breast;

‘We be two strong men,’ said Kamal then, ‘but
she loveth the younger best.

60 So she shall go with a lifter’s dower, my tur-
quoise-studded rein,

My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver
stirrups twain.’

The Colonel’s son a pistol drew, and held it
muzzle-end.

‘Ye have taken the one from a foe,’ said he;
‘will ye take the mate from a friend?’

64 ‘A gift for a gift,’ said Kamal straight; ‘a limb
for the risk of a limb.

Thy father has sent his son to me, I’ll send my
son to him.’

With that he whistled his only son, that dropped
from a mountain crest—

He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he
looked like a lance in rest.

68 ‘Now, here is thy master,’ Kamal said, ‘who
leads a troop of the Guides,

And thou must ride at his left side as shield
on shoulder rides.

Till death or I cut loose the tie, at camp, and
board, and bed,

Thy life is his—thy fate it is to guard him with
thy head.

72 So, thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and
all her foes are thine,

And thou must harry thy father's hold for the
peace of the Border-line,

And thou must make a trooper tough and hack
thy way to power—

Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I
am hanged in Peshawur.'

76 They have looked each other between the eyes,
and there they found no fault;

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on leavened bread and salt;

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,

On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife,
and the Wondrous Names of God.

80 The Colonel's son he rides the mare, and Kamal's
boy the dun,

And two have come back to Fort Bukloh, where
there went forth but one.

And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full
twenty swords flew clear—

There was not a man but carried his feud with
the blood of the mountaineer.

84 'Ha' done! ha' done!' said the Colonel's son.
'Put up the steel at your sides;

Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—to-
night 'tis a man of the Guides!'

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never
the twain shall meet,*

*Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's
great Judgment Seat.*

88 *But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor
Breed, nor Birth,*

*When two strong men stand face to face, though
they come from the ends of the earth.*

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the publishers of 'Barrack Room Ballads.'*

44. THE SARACEN AND THE CHRISTIAN KNIGHT

PART I

Sir Walter Scott, Bart. (1771-1832), was born at Edinburgh. His first original work as a poet was *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, published in 1805; *Marmion* followed in 1808; and *The Lady of the Lake* in 1810. These are his best poems, and excel in their description of the natural scenery of the Scottish Highlands. In 1814 he published *Waverley*, the first of the long series of novels upon which his great fame so largely and so deservedly rests. He created the historical novel in such tales as *Kenilworth*, *Ivanhoe*, and *Quentin Durward*. Scott was made a baronet by George IV. soon after his accession.

They had now arrived at the knot of palm-trees, and the fountain which welled out from beneath their shade in sparkling profusion.

We have spoken of a moment of truce in the midst of war; and this, a spot of beauty in the midst of a sterile desert, was scarce less dear to the imagination. It was a scene which, perhaps, would elsewhere have deserved little notice; but as the single speck, in a boundless horizon, which promised the refreshment of shade and living water,

these blessings, held cheap where they are common, rendered the fountain and its neighbourhood a little paradise.

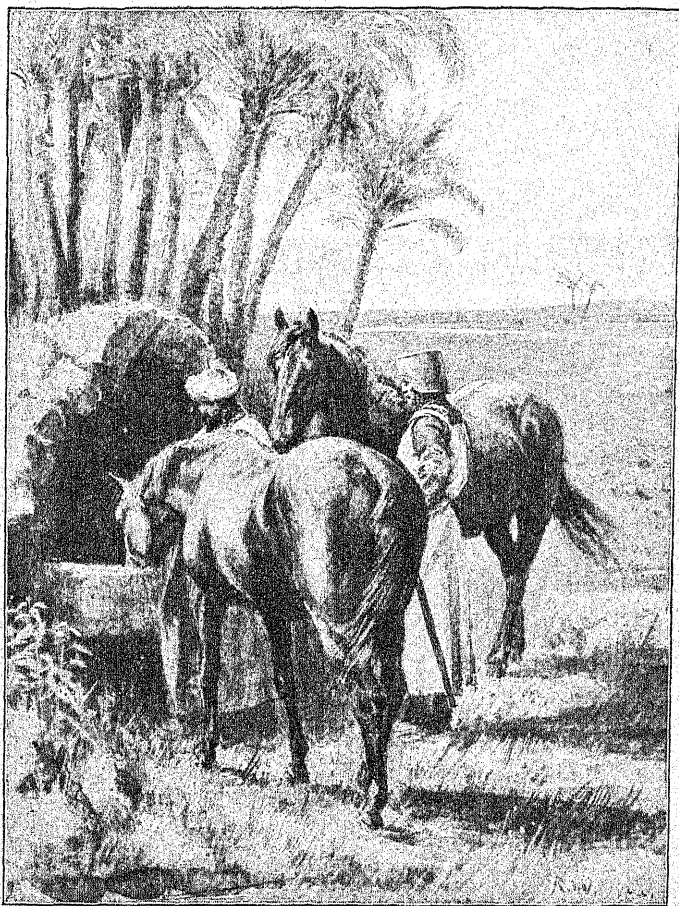
Some generous or charitable hand, ere yet the evil days of Palestine began, had walled in and arched over the fountain, to preserve it from being absorbed in the earth, or choked by the flitting clouds of dust with which the least breath of wind covered the desert. The arch was now broken, and partly ruinous; but it still so far projected over, and covered in the fountain, that it excluded the sun in a great measure from its waters, which, hardly touched by a straggling beam, while all around was blazing, lay in a steady repose, alike delightful to the eye and the imagination.

Stealing from under the arch, they were first received in a marble basin, much defaced, indeed, but still cheering the eye, by showing that the place was anciently considered as a station, that the hand of man had been there, and that man's accommodation had been in some measure attended to. The thirsty and weary traveller was reminded by these signs that others had suffered similar difficulties, reposed in the same spot, and, doubtless, found their way in safety to a more fertile country.

Again, the scarce visible current which escaped from the basin served to nourish the few trees which surrounded the fountain, and where it sunk into the ground and disappeared its refreshing presence was acknowledged by a carpet of velvet verdure.

In this delightful spot the two warriors halted,

and each, after his own fashion, proceeded to relieve



his horse from saddle, bit, and rein, and permitted the animals to drink at the basin ere they refreshed

themselves from the fountain head, which arose under the vault. They then suffered the steeds to go loose, confident that their interest, as well as their domesticated habits, would prevent their straying from the pure water and fresh grass.

Christian and Saracen next sat down together on the turf, and produced each the small allowance of store which they carried for their own refreshment. Yet, ere they severally proceeded to their scanty meal, they eyed each other with that curiosity which the close and doubtful conflict in which they had been so lately engaged was calculated to inspire. Each was desirous to measure the strength, and form some estimate of the character, of an adversary so formidable; and each was compelled to acknowledge that, had he fallen in the conflict, it had been by a noble hand.

The champions formed a striking contrast to each other in person and features, and might have formed no inaccurate representatives of their different nations. The Frank seemed a powerful man, built after the ancient Gothic cast of form, with light brown hair, which, on the removal of his helmet, was seen to curl thick and profusely over his head.

His features had acquired, from the hot climate, a hue much darker than those parts of his neck which were less frequently exposed to view, or than was warranted by his full and well-opened blue eye, the colour of his hair, and of the moustaches which thickly shaded his upper lip, while his chin was carefully divested of beard, after the Norman fashion.

His nose was Grecian and well-formed; his mouth a little large in proportion, but filled with well-set, strong, and beautifully white teeth; his head small, and set upon the neck with much grace.

His age could not exceed thirty, but, if the effects of toil and climate were allowed for, might be three or four years under that period. His form was tall, powerful, and athletic, like that of a man whose strength might, in later life, become unwieldy, but which was hitherto united with lightness and activity. His hands, when he withdrew the mailed gloves, were long, fair, and well-proportioned; the wrist-bones peculiarly large and strong; and the arms themselves remarkably well-shaped and brawny. A military hardihood and careless frankness of expression characterised his language and his motions; and his voice had the tone of one more accustomed to command than to obey, and who was in the habit of expressing his sentiments aloud and boldly, whenever he was called upon to announce them.

45. THE SARACEN AND THE CHRISTIAN KNIGHT

PART II

The Saracen Emir formed a marked and striking contrast with the Western Crusader. His stature was indeed above the middle size, but he was at least three inches shorter than the European, whose size approached the gigantic. His slender limbs and

long spare hands and arms, though well-proportioned to his person, and suited to the style of his countenance, did not at first aspect promise the display of vigour which the Emir had lately exhibited.

But, on looking more closely, his limbs, where exposed to view, seemed divested of all that was fleshy or cumbersome; so that, nothing being left but bone, brawn, and sinew, it was a frame fitted for exertion and fatigue, far beyond that of a bulky champion, whose strength and size are counter-balanced by weight, and who is exhausted by his own exertions.

The countenance of the Saracen naturally bore a general national resemblance to the Eastern tribe from whom he descended, and was as unlike as possible to the exaggerated terms in which the minstrels of the day were wont to represent the infidel champions, and the fabulous description which a sister art still presents as the Saracen's head upon sign-posts.

His features were small, well-formed, and delicate, though deeply embrowned by the Eastern sun, and terminated by a flowing and curled black beard, which seemed trimmed with peculiar care. The nose was straight and regular, the eyes keen, deep-set, black, and glowing, and his teeth equalled in beauty the ivory of his deserts.

The person and proportions of the Saracen, in short, stretched on the turf near to his powerful antagonist, might have been compared to his sheeny and crescent-formed sabre, with its narrow and light but bright and keen Damascus blade, con-

trasted with the long and ponderous Gothic war-sword, which was flung unbuckled on the same sod.

The Emir was in the very flower of his age, and might perhaps have been termed eminently beautiful, but for the narrowness of his forehead, and something of too much thinness and sharpness of feature, or at least what might have seemed such in a European estimate of beauty.

The manners of the Eastern warrior were grave, graceful, and decorous; indicating, however, in some particulars the habitual restraint which men of warm and choleric tempers often set as a guard upon their native impetuosity of disposition, and at the same time a sense of his own dignity, which seemed to impose a certain formality of behaviour in him who entertained it.

This haughty feeling of superiority was perhaps equally entertained by his new European acquaintance, but the effect was different; and the same feeling which dictated to the Christian knight a bold, blunt, and somewhat careless bearing, as one too conscious of his own importance to be anxious about the opinions of others, appeared to prescribe to the Saracen a style of courtesy more studiously and formally observant of ceremony.

Both were courteous; but the courtesy of the Christian seemed to flow rather from a good-humoured sense of what was due to others, that of the Moslem from a high feeling of what was to be expected from himself.

The provision which each had made for his refreshment was simple, but the meal of the Saracen

was abstemious. A handful of dates and a morsel of coarse barley-bread sufficed to relieve the hunger of the latter, whose education had habituated him to the fare of the desert, although, since their Syrian conquests, the Arabian simplicity of life frequently gave place to the most unbounded profusion of luxury. A few draughts from the lovely fountain by which they reposed completed his meal.

That of the Christian, though coarse, was more genial. Dried hog's flesh, the abomination of the Moslemah, was the chief part of his repast; and his drink, derived from a leathern bottle, contained something better than pure element. He fed with more display of appetite, and drank with more appearance of satisfaction, than the Saracen judged it becoming to show in the performance of a mere bodily function; and, doubtless, the secret contempt which each entertained for the other, as the follower of a false religion, was considerably increased by the marked difference of their diet and manners. But each had found the weight of his opponent's arm, and the mutual respect which the bold struggle had created was sufficient to subdue other and inferior considerations.

From 'The Talisman,' by SIR WALTER SCOTT.

46. WE RE-CAPTURE THE INDIAMAN

PART I

As soon as we came up we were collared and seized.

'Pilot,' said Bramble.

'Pilot,' said I.

They then asked us, in English, how many men were on board.

As it was no use concealing the fact, we replied: a portion of the privateer's men then went down, and surprised them all in their beds. In about five minutes they came up again, leading the lieutenant and his men, in their shirts. By the directions of the French captain they were immediately passed over the side into the privateer, and Bramble and I were the only two Englishmen left on board of the ship.

The French captain then asked us if we knew where we were; and whether there was any danger. We replied that we were among the sands, and that it would be difficult to get her out of them with that wind, and impossible until the tide turned.

'When will the tide turn?' said the captain.

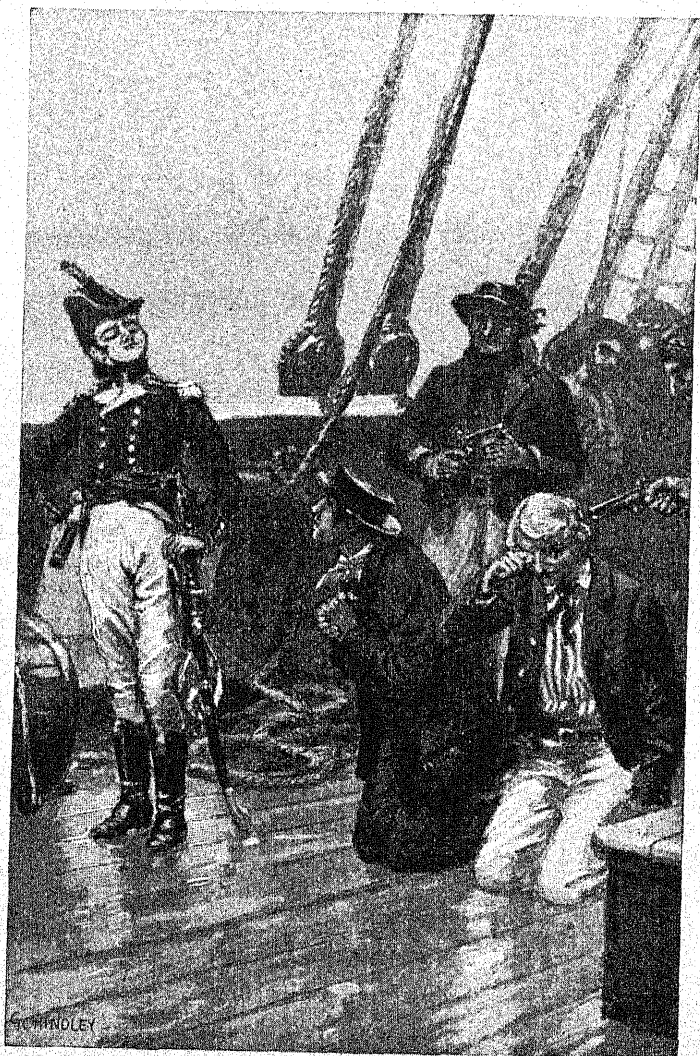
'In an hour or less?' replied Bramble, appealing to me.

I replied in the affirmative.

'Well, then, you will take this vessel clear of the shoals, my men; and if you do not, your lives are worth nothing:—hold pistols to their heads,' continued he to the officer, 'and the moment that the ship touches, blow their brains out.'

Here Bramble, to my astonishment, went on his knees. 'Spare our lives,' said he, 'and we will take the vessel safe to the French coast;' at the same time he gave me a pinch.

'If you do not you shall not live a minute,' said the captain (another pinch from Bramble). I now



understood him, and I also went down on my knees, and pretended to cry. 'We can't take her out if this weather lasts,' said I, whimpering. 'It's impossible.'

'No, no! not if this weather lasts,' said Bramble, 'but as soon as it changes we will do it.'

'Very well, so long as you do it when you can, that is all I ask. Now,' said he to the officer he had before addressed, 'you'll have twenty men—keep a sharp look-out—and don't lose a moment in getting under weigh as soon as you can.'

The captain then returned to the privateer with the rest of the men, leaving the ship in charge of the prize-master. The privateer was boomed off; but whether she dropped her anchor near to us, or remained under weigh, I could not tell. The men who had held the pistols to our heads now went away with the others, to plunder, according to the manners and customs of all privateer's-men, of whatever nation they may happen to be. Bramble and I walked aft.

'Pinned once more, by all that's blue! well, it can't be helped—but we're not in a French prison yet.'

'Why did you go down on your knees to those fellows?' said I, rather sulkily.

'Why, because I wished them to think we were chicken-hearted, and that we should not be watched—and might have a chance—who knows?'

'Two against twenty are heavy odds,' replied I.

'That depends upon whether you trust to your head or your arms. It must be head work this

time. You see, Tom, we have so far a chance, that we cannot weigh till it clears up—they know that as well as we do. I'm pretty sure it will be thick all to-morrow, and perhaps longer; so you see something may turn up by that time. We are well in, and right in the Channel, for vessels up or down—I say again we are not in a French prison yet. They can't take her out of this—we must do it; and we may run on shore if we like: and I tell you what, Tom, if it wasn't for Bessy, I'd just as soon that my brains should be blown out as that these French fellows should take such a rich prize. Now let's go below—we mustn't be seen talking together too much; but look out sharp, Tom, and watch my motions.'

The officer who had charge of the vessel now came on deck, and looked round him: he could speak English sufficient to carry on a conversation. The weather was very thick, and the rain drove down with the wind: he saw that it was impossible that the ship could be moved. He told us that we should have a hundred guineas each and our liberty if we took the ship safe either to Ostend or any French port. We replied that we should be very glad to do so, as it would be ten times as much as we should have received for piloting her up the Thames; and then we went down below. In the meantime the men were sent for on deck, divided into watches, and when the watch was set the others went down below again. After taking a glass or two of wine, for the Frenchmen had soon rummaged out what there was to be drunk in the cabin, Bramble

and I returned on deck. We found the Frenchmen in charge of the watch diligent: one was looking out forward—another at the taffrail; the remaining three were walking the deck. Bramble went to the gangway, and I followed him.

‘Tom, I see the hatchway grating is on deck—I only wish we once had them all beneath it.’

‘I only wish we had all but the watch—I’d have a try for it then,’ replied I.

‘No, no, Tom, that wouldn’t do; but we must trust to Providence and a sharp look-out. See where you can put your hand upon a crowbar or handspike, in case you want it; but don’t touch it. Come, there’s nothing to be done in any way just now, so let’s go down and take a snooze for an hour or two: and, Tom, if they ask us to drink, drink with them, and pretend to be half fuddled.’

47. WE RE-CAPTURE THE INDIAMAN

PART II

We went down again, and found the privateer’s-men getting very jolly; but they did not offer us anything to drink, so we laid on some spare sails outside the cabin, and tried to go to sleep, but I could not, for I was very unhappy. I could see no chance of our escape, as nothing but a man-of-war would be likely to interfere and re-capture us.

Bramble and I were fully aware that the promises of the prize-master were only to cajole us, and that once in a French port, had we claimed the fulfil-

ment of them, a kick would have been all which we should, in all probability, have received for our pains.

About one o'clock in the morning I rose and went on deck. The watch had been relieved; the weather also looked brighter, as if it were going to clear up; and I became still more depressed. Bramble soon followed me.

'It's clearing up,' said I, 'but I don't think it will last.'

'Never a bit,' replied Bramble; 'in half-an-hour it will be thicker than ever, so now I'll go and call the officer, and tell him he had better get under weigh—that will make him have less suspicion of us.'

Bramble did so; the officer came on deck, the men were turned out, and the windlass was manned; for, although so large a vessel, she had no capstern. The men hove in the cable in silence, and were short stay apeak, when, as we had foreseen, it came on thicker than ever. Bramble pointed it out to the officer, who was perfectly satisfied that nothing could be done: the cable was veered out again, and the men sent below.

'We hope you'll think of your promise to us, sir,' said Bramble to the officer, as he was going down.

'Yes, I will, I swear,' replied he, slapping Bramble on the back.

The morning broke, and the weather continued the same: it was not possible to see ten yards clear of the ship, and, of course, in such weather it was not likely that any other vessels would be attempt-

ing to pass through the Channel. At noon it cleared up a little, and the windlass was again manned; but, in a short time, the fog became thicker than ever.

The Frenchmen now became very impatient, but there was no help for it; they walked about the deck swearing and stamping, and throwing out invectives against the fog and rain as they looked up at it. The night closed in; the men were kept on deck until eleven o'clock, when the flood-tide made, and then they were sent down again, as nothing could be done until the ebb.

At twelve o'clock the weather became worse, the wind freshened considerably, and veered more to the southward, the rain poured down in torrents, and the men of the watch sheltered themselves down in the hatchway. The officer came up on the deck, and called Bramble, who had been down below. Bramble told him what was very true, that the wind would probably shift, and the weather clear up in a few hours, and that we should be able to weigh with the coming down of the ebb. He asked Bramble whether he thought it would blow hard. Bramble could not say, but it would be better that the men should not turn in, as they might be wanted, and that if the fore-topmast staysail was hoisted, she would lie better at her anchor; and in case of parting, he would be able to manage her till sail was set. This advice was followed, and all the men sat up in the cabin drinking—those who had the watch occasionally coming down to refresh themselves.

They gave us a glass of grog each that night, a proof that they had drunk until they were good-

natured. Bramble said to me, as we sat down outside, 'It will be clear to-morrow morning, Tom, that's sartain—it must be to-night or never. I've been thinking of lowering the quarter-boat down, when they are a little more mizzled—they are getting on pretty fast, for Frenchmen haven't the heads for drinking that Englishmen have. Now it pours down beautifully, and here they come down for shelter.'

For three hours we watched; it was then four o'clock, and the men were most of them asleep. Those of the middle watch came down dripping wet, and called the others to relieve them, but only two of them answered to the call. They who had come down began to drink freely, to warm themselves after their ducking, and by half-past four, except the two men on deck, every Frenchman was either fast asleep or muddled.

'Tom,' said Bramble, 'now's our time—slip up on deck—go forward if no one is there, and saw through the cable as quickly as you can—it won't take long, for it's a coir rope. As soon as you have got through two strands out of three, come aft.'

48. WE RE-CAPTURE THE INDIAMAN

PART III

I went on deck, and looked round; I could not see the two men, it was so dark. I then walked forward, and looking well round to see that they were not on the forecastle, I sat down before the

windlass, and commenced operations. In a couple of minutes I had divided the two strands, and I went aft, where I found Bramble at the binnacle, in which a light was burning.

‘I have done it,’ said I, ‘and if the wind freshens at all, she will part.’

‘All’s right,’ said Bramble, ‘those two fellows are fast asleep under the taffrail, covered up with the trysail, which lies there. Now, Tom, for a bold push; go down once more, and see how they are getting on in the cabin.’

I went down: every man was asleep—some on the locker, some with their heads on the table. I went on deck: it rained harder than ever.

‘This will be a clearing shower, Tom, depend upon it; and the wind is freshening up again. Now, have you looked out for a handspike or crowbar?’

‘Yes, I know where there are two.’

‘Then come with me; we must unship the ladder, and pull it up on deck, and then put on the grating; after that we must take our chance—we may succeed, and we may not—all depends upon their not waking too soon.’

We went to the hatchway, cut the cleat-lashings, hauled the ladder on deck, and then put on the grating.

‘That will do, Tom, for the present. Now do you take the helm with a crowbar all ready by your side. I will go forward and cut the cable; if those fellows rouse up while I am forward, you must do your best. I leave you, Tom, because you are more powerful than I am.’

'I'll manage them both, never fear,' whispered I.

'When she swings, mind you put the helm a-starboard, Tom,' said Bramble, in my ear.

This was the most nervous part of the whole transaction; the men abaft might wake, and I should have to master them how I could—and even if I did, the scuffle might awake those below, who were not yet secured; although, for a time, it would be difficult for them to get on deck. But fortune favoured us; the cable was severed, the ship swung round, and Bramble returned aft, and took the helm.

'Now is the time to see if I'm a pilot or not, Tom,' said he. 'I think I can steer her through by compass, now that it's nearly high water—luck's all. It was fortunate that we got the staysail hoisted for us, or we could have made nothing of it.'

'It's clearing up fast,' said I, as I kept my eyes upon where the men were lying abaft; 'and there'll be plenty of wind.'

'Yes, and we'll have daylight soon. Tom, I don't want you: I should like you to step aft, and stand over those two chaps; if they wake, knock them senseless—don't kill them, as you can easily bind them while they are stupefied. And Tom, look about you for some seizings all ready. I wish they would wake, for we are not safe while they are not secure. Put a handspike by me, and, if necessary, I will leave the helm for a minute, and help you: it's better that she should go on shore, than they should master us. We're pretty safe now, at all events—I see the land—all's right.'

It was now daylight. After this whispering with

Bramble, I went aft with a handspike in my hand—and I had not been there more than two minutes when one of the privateer's-men turned the canvas on one side, and looked up. The handspike came down upon his head, and he dropped senseless; but the noise roused up the other, and I dealt him a blow more severe than the first. I then threw down my weapon, and, perceiving the deep-sea lead-line coiled up on the reel, I cut off sufficient, and in a short time had bound them both by the hands and feet. They groaned heavily, and I was afraid that I had killed them—but there was no help for it.

‘They are safe,’ said I, returning to Bramble.

‘I thought I heard you, but I did not look round at the time. Half-an-hour more, Tom, and, even with this wind, we shall be safe—and, Tom, our fortune's made. If they wake below, we must fight hard for it, for we've a right to salvage, my boy—one eighth of the whole cargo—that's worth fighting for. Depend upon it they'll be stirring soon—so, Tom, go aft, and drag the trysail here, and put it on the hatchway grating—its weight will prevent their lifting it up in a hurry. If we can only hold our own for twenty minutes longer, she is ours, and all right.’

49. WE RE-CAPTURE THE INDIAMAN

PART IV

As soon as I had stowed the trysail on the hatchway grating, I looked about to see what else I could put on the skylight, which they might also

attempt to force up. I could find nothing but the coils of rope, which I piled on; but, while I was so doing, a pistol was fired at me from below, and the ball passed through the calf of my leg; it was, however, not a wound to disable me, and I bound it up with my handkerchief.

'They're all alive now, Tom, so you must keep your eyes open. However, we're pretty safe—the light vessel is not a mile off. Keep away from the skylight—you had better stand upon the trysail, Tom—you will help to keep the hatchway down, for they are working at it.'

Another pistol was now fired at Bramble, which missed him.

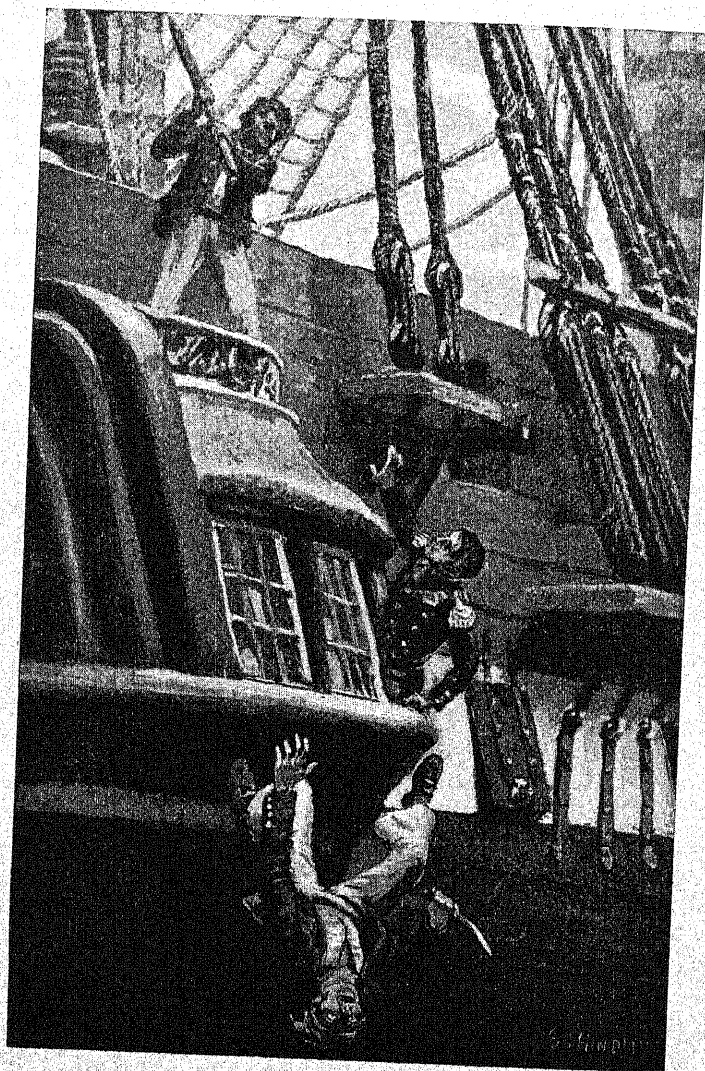
'Tom, see if there's no bunting aft, and, if so, just throw some over this part of the skylight—it will blind them, at all events; otherwise I'm just a capital mark for them.'

I ran aft, and gathered some flags, which I brought and laid over the skylight, so as to intercept their view of Bramble; but whilst I was so doing another pistol-shot was fired—it passed me, but hit Bramble, taking off one of his fingers.

'That's no miss, but we've got through the worst of it, Tom—I don't think they can see me now—don't put that English ensign on—but hoist it Union downwards. I shall round to now; there's the men-of-war in the Medway. Why don't they look out, and they will see that they can't escape.'

'They've only the stern windows to look out of: the quarter-galleries are boarded up.'

'Then, Tom, just look if they have not beat them



out, for you know they may climb on deck by them.'

It was fortunate that Bramble mentioned this: I went aft with the handspike in my hand, and when I was about to look over, I met face to face a Frenchman, who had climbed out of the starboard quarter-gallery, and was just gaining the deck. A blow with the handspike sent him overboard, and he went astern; but another was following him, and I stood prepared to receive him. It was the officer in command, who spoke English.

He paused at the sight of the other man falling overboard and my uplifted handspike; and I said to him, 'It's of no use—look at the English men-of-war close to you: if you do not go back to the cabin, and keep your men quiet, when the men-of-war's men come on board we will show you no quarter.'

We were now entering the Medway; and the Frenchman perceived that they could not escape, and would only bring mischief on themselves by any further assault, so he got into the quarter-gallery again, and spoke to his men. As soon as I perceived that he was entering, I ran over to the other side to the larboard quarter-gallery, and there again I found a Frenchman had nearly gained the deck. I levelled the handspike at his head, but he dodged, and returned to the cabin by the way he came; and after that there were no more attempts at recovering the vessel.

In five minutes more we were abreast of the *Euphrosyne*, Sir James O'Connor's frigate, which was now lying, with only her lower masts in, alongside of

the hulk. I hailed for assistance, and let fly the foretop-mast staysail sheet, while Bramble rounded the ship to. The boats were sent on board immediately; and as we had not a cable bent, they made the ship fast to the hulk astern of them. We stated our case in few words to the officer; and having ascertained that Sir James O'Connor was on board, requested that we might be sent to the frigate.

'Is it you?' said Sir James, as I came on the gangway; 'what is it all about—are you hurt? Come down into the cabin.'

Bramble and I followed him down into the cabin; and I stated the whole particulars of the capture and re-capture.

'Excellent—most excellent! I wish you both joy; but first we must have the surgeon here.' Sir James rang the bell; and when the surgeon came he went on deck to give orders.

From 'Poor Jack.' by CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

50. PATRIOTISM

Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
'This is my own, my native land!'
4 Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd
From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
8 For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;

- Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
12 The wretch, concentrated all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
16 Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

51. NICHOLAS NICKLEBY MEETS MR. VINCENT CRUMMLES

PART I

By degrees the prospect receded more and more on either hand, and as they had been shut out from rich and extensive scenery, so they emerged once again upon the open country. The knowledge that they were drawing near their place of destination, gave them fresh courage to proceed; but the way had been difficult, and they had loitered on the road, and Smike was tired. Thus twilight had already closed in, when they turned off the path to the door of a roadside inn, yet twelve miles short of Portsmouth.

'Twelve miles,' said Nicholas, leaning with both hands on his stick, and looking doubtfully at Smike.

'Twelve long miles,' repeated the landlord.

'Is it a good road?' inquired Nicholas.

'Very bad,' said the landlord. As of course, being a landlord, he would say.

'I want to get on,' observed Nicholas, hesitating.
'I scarcely know what to do.'

‘Don’t let me influence you,’ rejoined the landlord. ‘I wouldn’t go on if it was me.’

‘Wouldn’t you?’ asked Nicholas, with the same uncertainty.

‘Not if I knew when I was well off,’ said the landlord. And having said it he pulled up his apron, put his hands into his pockets, and taking a step or two outside the door, looked down the dark road with an assumption of great indifference.

A glance at the toil-worn face of Smike determined Nicholas, so without any further consideration he made up his mind to stay where he was.

The landlord led them into the kitchen, and as there was a good fire he remarked that it was very cold. If there had happened to be a bad one he would have observed that it was very warm.

‘What can you give us for supper?’ was Nicholas’s natural question.

‘Why—what would you like?’ was the landlord’s no less natural answer.

Nicholas suggested cold meat, but there was no cold meat—poached eggs, but there were no eggs—mutton chops, but there wasn’t a mutton chop within three miles, though there had been more last week than they knew what to do with, and would be an extraordinary supply the day after to-morrow.

‘Then,’ said Nicholas, ‘I must leave it entirely to you, as I would have done at first if you had allowed me.’

‘Why, then, I’ll tell you what,’ rejoined the landlord. ‘There’s a gentleman in the parlour

that's ordered a hot beef-steak pudding and potatoes at nine. There's more of it than he can manage, and I have very little doubt that if I ask leave, you can sup with him. I'll do that in a minute.'

'No, no,' said Nicholas, detaining him. 'I would rather not. I—at least—pshaw! why cannot I speak out. Here; you see that I am travelling in a very humble manner, and have made my way hither on foot. It is more than probable, I think, that the gentleman may not relish my company; and although I am the dusty figure you see, I am too proud to thrust myself into his.'

'Lord love you,' said the landlord, 'it's only Mr. Crummles; *he* isn't particular.'

'Is he not?' asked Nicholas, on whose mind, to tell the truth, the prospect of the savoury pudding was making some impression.

'Not he,' replied the landlord. 'He'll like your way of talking, I know. But we'll soon see all about that. Just wait a minute.'

The landlord hurried into the parlour without staying for further permission, nor did Nicholas strive to prevent him—wisely considering that supper under the circumstances was too serious a matter to trifle with. It was not long before the host returned in a condition of much excitement.

'All right,' he said in a low voice. 'I knew he would. You'll see something rather worth seeing in there. Ecod, how they are a-going of it!'

There was no time to inquire to what this exclamation, which was delivered in a very rapturous

tone, referred, for he had already thrown open the door of the room; into which Nicholas, followed by Smike with the bundle on his shoulder (he carried it about with him as vigilantly as if it had been a purse of gold), straightway repaired.

52. NICHOLAS NICKLEBY MEETS MR. VINCENT CRUMMLES

PART II

Nicholas was prepared for something odd, but not for something quite so odd as the sight he encountered. At the upper end of the room were a couple of boys, one of them very tall and the other very short, both dressed as sailors—or at least as theatrical sailors, with belts, buckles, pig-tails, and pistols complete—fighting what is called in play-bills a terrific combat with two of those short broadswords with basket hilts which are commonly used at our minor theatres. The short boy had gained a great advantage over the tall boy, who was reduced to mortal strait, and both were overlooked by a large heavy man, perched against the corner of a table, who emphatically adjured them to strike a little more fire out of the swords, and they couldn't fail to bring the house down on the very first night.

'Mr. Vincent Crummles,' said the landlord, with an air of great deference, 'this is the young gentleman.'

Mr. Vincent Crummles received Nicholas with

an inclination of the head, something between the courtesy of a Roman emperor and the nod of a pot companion; and bade the landlord shut the door and begone.

'There's a picture,' said Mr. Crummles, motioning Nicholas not to advance and spoil it. 'The little 'un has him; if the big 'un doesn't knock under in three seconds he's a dead man. Do that again, boys.'

The two combatants went to work afresh, and chopped away until the swords emitted a shower of sparks, to the great satisfaction of Mr. Crummles, who appeared to consider this a very great point indeed. The engagement commenced with about two hundred chops administered by the short sailor and the tall sailor alternately, without producing any particular result until the short sailor was chopped down on one knee; but this was nothing to him, for he worked himself about on the one knee with the assistance of his left hand, and fought most desperately until the tall sailor chopped his sword out of his grasp. Now the inference was, that the short sailor, reduced to this extremity, would give in at once and cry quarter, but instead of that he all of a sudden drew a large pistol from his belt and presented it at the face of the tall sailor, who was so overcome at this (not expecting it) that he let the short sailor pick up his sword and begin again. Then the chopping recommenced, and a variety of fancy chops were administered on both sides, such as chops dealt with the left hand and under the leg and over the right shoulder and over the left, and when the short sailor made a



vigorous cut at the tall sailor's legs, which would have shaved them clean off if it had taken effect, the tall sailor jumped over the short sailor's sword, wherefore to balance the matter and make it all fair, the tall sailor administered the same cut and the short sailor jumped over *his* sword. After this there was a good deal of dodging about and hitching up of the inexpressibles in the absence of braces, and then the short sailor (who was the moral character evidently, for he always had the best of it) made a violent demonstration and closed with the tall sailor, who, after a few unavailing struggles, went down and expired in great torture as the short sailor put his foot upon his breast and bored a hole in him through and through.

'That'll be a double *encore* if you take care, boys,' said Mr. Crummles. 'You had better get your wind now, and change your clothes.'

Having addressed these words to the combatants, he saluted Nicholas, who then observed that the face of Mr. Crummles was quite proportionate in size to his body; that he had a very full under-lip, a hoarse voice, as though he were in the habit of shouting very much, and very short black hair, shaved off nearly to the crown of his head—to admit (as he afterwards learnt) of his more easily wearing character wigs of any shape or pattern.

'What did you think of that, sir?' inquired Mr. Crummles.

'Very good, indeed—capital,' answered Nicholas.

'You won't see such boys as those very often, I think,' said Mr. Crummles.

Nicholas assented—observing, that if they were a little better match——

‘Match!’ cried Mr. Crummles.

‘I mean if they were a little more of a size,’ said Nicholas, explaining himself.

‘Size!’ repeated Mr. Crummles; ‘why, it’s the very essence of the combat that there should be a foot or two between them. How are you to get up the sympathies of the audience if there isn’t a little man contending against a great one—unless there’s at least five to one, and we haven’t hands enough for that business in our company.’

‘I see,’ replied Nicholas. ‘I beg your pardon. That didn’t occur to me, I confess.’

‘It’s the main point,’ said Mr. Crummles. ‘I open at Portsmouth the day after to-morrow. If you’re going there, look into the theatre, and see how that’ll tell.’

From ‘Nicholas Nickleby,’ by CHARLES DICKENS.

53. THE LAST CHARGE AT WATERLOO

(The Battle of Waterloo was fought June 18, 1815)

PART I

During all this time the roaring of those guns had been something dreadful to listen to, but now they suddenly died away, though it was like the lull in a thunderstorm when one feels that a worse crash is coming hard at the fringe of it. There was still a mighty noise on the distant wing, where the Prussians were pushing their way onwards, but

that was two miles away. The other batteries, both French and English, were silent, and the smoke cleared so that the armies could see a little of each other.

It was a dreary sight along our ridge, for there seemed to be just a few scattered knots of red and the lines of green where the German Legion stood, while the masses of the French appeared to be as thick as ever, though of course we knew that they must have lost many thousands in these attacks. We heard a great cheering and shouting from among them, and then suddenly all their batteries opened together with a roar which made the din of the earlier part seem nothing in comparison.

It might well be twice as loud, for every battery was twice as near, being moved right up to point blank range, with huge masses of horse between and behind them to guard them from attack.

When that mighty roar burst upon our ears there was not a man, down to the drummer boys, who did not understand what it meant. It was Napoleon's last great effort to crush us. There were but two more hours of light, and if we could hold our own for those all would be well. Starved and weary and spent, we prayed that we might have strength to load and stab and fire while a man of us stood upon his feet.

His cannon could do us no great hurt now, for we were on our faces, and in an instant we could turn into a huddle of bayonets if his horse came down again. But behind the thunder of the guns there rose a sharper, shriller noise, whirring and rattling, the wildest, jauntiest, most stirring kind of sound.

ENGLISH COURSE FOR INDIAN SCHOOLS

Baber's Memoirs, IV (pages 183 to 185).

cur'-rent coin : coin that passed current at the time. The rupee is the current coin of to-day. If we tried to use an old-fashioned tanka of the time of the Emperor Altamish, and tried to buy something with it, the shopkeeper would refuse to accept it. It would not be current. Similarly we speak of currency notes. A ten-rupee note is a currency note. It passes current, shopkeepers accept it, at any time it is worth ten silver rupees.

neg'-li-gent : careless, would not take any trouble.

cust'-o-dy : in the charge or custody of officers whose duty it was to watch them.

A Trip to Darjiling (pages 185 to 191).

un'-e-vent'-ful : without event or adventure.

sta'-ble : here an adjective. An unstable house is a rickety house, without stability. A person who is always changing his mind is an unstable person. He has an unstable mind.

mā-jor : large. The opposite to major is minor, small. We could speak of the smaller battles of Baber's uncles as their minor engagements. The great battle between Baber and Ibrahim Lodi was a major engagement.

fas'-cin-a'-tion : the scene was very beautiful. I stood long and looked at it. It seemed to *fascinate* me, I could not turn from it and leave it.

sens'-a'-tion : feeling.

dim-in'-ish : get less and less.

Hiawatha (pages 191 to 195).

Big-Sea-Water : the name, in English, which the Indians gave to the lake.

beat the water : the little waves beat upon the shore.

linden cradle : cradle of linden wood.

Wah-wah-tay-see : the name given by the Indians to the little shining fire-fly.

brake : group of small trees, thicket.

The Blue Jackal (page 197).

vat : the vat was a cistern that contained the indigo dye.

a-noint' : we anoint ourselves when we put oil or perfumes on ourselves. We anoint ourselves with oils and perfumes.

ar'-is-to-crats : the lords, members of the highest society.

Hearty Reading (page 199).

grasp a nettle : a nettle leaf, if touched lightly, will sting the fingers. It is a common plant in Europe.

as-per'-ity : sharpness, sting.

The Nightingale and the Glow-Worm (page 200).

crop : a bird's crop is in its throat. The grain it pecks up goes at once into its crop.

in-tent' : intention.

har-angue' : (pronounced as if har-ang'). I went to buy a shoe-lace. The shopkeeper is always telling people how they should behave. He began to tell me. I listened patiently for several minutes but he did not stop. I waited ten minutes, but he still continued to harangue me. At last I could stand and listen no longer. "Do stop your harangue," I exclaimed, "and give me my shoe-laces."

el'-o-quent : with many words at his command.